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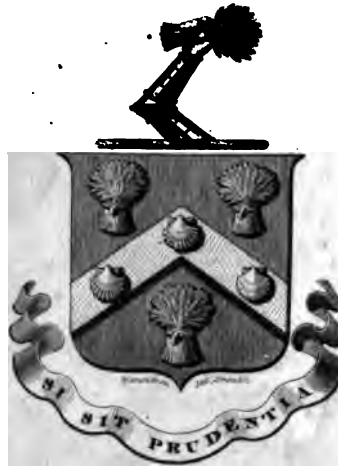

Morton Eden

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THE

RAMBLER.

BY

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri,
Quo me cunque rapit tempestas, deferor hospes.
Hor.

VOL. III.

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THE

RAMBLER.

N° 105., TUESDAY, MARCH 19. 1751.

—Animorum
Impulsu, et cæca magnaque cupidine ducti.
JUV.

Vain man runs headlong, to caprice resign'd;
Impell'd by passion, and with folly blind.
DRYD.

I WAS lately considering, among other objects of speculation, the new attempt of an *universal register*; an office, in which every man may lodge an account of his superfluities and wants, of whatever he desires to purchase or to sell. My imagination soon presented to me the latitude to which this design may be extended by integrity and industry, and the advantages which may be justly hoped from a general mart of intelligence, when once its reputation shall be so established that neither reproach nor fraud shall be feared from it; when an application to it shall not be censured as the last resource of desperation, nor its informations suspected as the fortuitous suggestions of men obliged not to appear ignorant. A place where

every exuberance may be discharged, and every deficiency supplied, where every lawful passion may find its gratifications, and every honest curiosity receive satisfaction, where the stock of a nation, pecuniary and intellectual, may be brought together, and where all conditions of humanity may hope to find relief, pleasure, and accommodation, must equally deserve the attention of the merchant and philosopher, of him who mingles in the tumult of business, and him who only lives to amuse himself with the various employments and pursuits of others. Nor will it be an uninstructing school to the greatest masters of method and dispatch, in such multiplicity can be preserved from embarrassment, and such tumult from inaccuracy.

While I was concerting this splendid project and filling my thoughts with its regulation, its conveniencies, its variety, and its consequences, I sunk gradually into slumber; but the same images though less distinct, still continued to float upon my fancy. I perceived myself at the gate of an immense edifice, where innumerable multitudes were passing without confusion; every face on which I fixed my eyes seemed settled in the contemplation of some important purpose, and every foot was hastened by eagerness and expectation. I followed the crowd without knowing whither I should be drawn, and remained a while in the unpleasing state of an idler, where all other beings were busy giving place every moment to those who had more importance in their looks. Ashamed to stand ignorant, and afraid to ask questions, at last I saw a lady sweeping by me, whom, by the quickness of her eyes, the agility of her steps, and

a mixture of levity and impatience, I knew to be my long-loved protectress CURIOSITY. "Great "goddess," said I, "may thy votary be per- "mitted to implore thy favour; if thou hast been "my directress from the first dawn of reason, if I "have followed thee through the maze of life "with invariable fidelity, if I have turned to "every new call, and quitted at thy nod one pur- "suit for another, if I have never stopped at the "invitations of fortune, nor forgot thy autho- "rity in the bowers of pleasure, inform me now "whither chance has conducted me."

"Thou art now," replied the smiling power, "in the presence of JUSTICE and of TRUTH, "whom the father of gods and men has sent down "to register the demands and pretensions of man "kind, that the world may at last be reduced to "order, and that none may complain hereafter "of being doomed to tasks for which they are un- "qualified, of possessing faculties for which they "cannot find employment, or virtues that languish "unobserved for want of opportunities to exert "them, of being encumbered with superfluities "which they would willingly resign, or of wast- "ing away in desires which ought to be satisfied. "JUSTICE is now to examine every man's wishes, "and TRUTH is to record them; let us ap- "proach, and observe the progress of this great "transaction."

She then moved forward, and TRUTH, who knew her among the most faithful of her followers, beckoned her to advance, till we were placed near the seat of JUSTICE. The first who required the assistance of the office, came forward with a slow

pace, and tumour of dignity, and shaking a weighty purse in his hand, demanded to be regis tered by TRUTH, as the MÆCENAS of the presen age, the chief encourager of literary merit, t whom men of learning and wit might apply in an exigence or distress with certainty of succour JUSTICE very mildly inquired, whether he ha calculated the expence of such a declaration whether he had been informed what number o petitioners would swarm about him? whether h could distinguish idleness and negligence from ca lamity, ostentation from knowledge, or vivacit from wit? To these questions he seemed not we provided with a reply, but repeated his desire t be recorded as a patron. JUSTICE then offere to register his proposal on these conditions, that h should never suffer himself to be flattered; that h should never delay an audience when he had nc thing to do; and that he should never encourag followers without intending to reward them These terms were too hard to be accepted; fc what, said he, is the end of patronage, but th pleasure of reading dedications, holding multitud in suspence, and enjoying their hopes, their fear and their anxiety, flattering them to assiduity, anc at last, dismissing them for impatience? JUSTIC heard his confession, and ordered his name to b posted upon the gate among cheats and robber and publick nuisances, which all were by th notice warned to avoid.

Another required to be made known as the di coverer of a new art of education, by which la guages and sciences might be taught to all capac ties and all inclinations, without fear of punishmen

pain of confinement, loss of any part of the gay mien of ignorance, or any obstruction of the necessary progress in dress, dancing, or cards.

JUSTICE and TRUTH did not trouble this great adept with many inquiries; but finding his address awkward, and his speech barbarous, ordered him to be registered as a tall fellow who wanted employment, and might serve in any post where the knowledge of reading and writing was not required.

A man of a very grave and philosophick aspect, required notice to be given of his intention to set out a certain day, on a submarine voyage, and of his willingness to take in passengers for no more than double the price at which they might sail above water. His desire was granted, and he retired to a convenient stand, in expectation of filling his ship, and growing rich in a short time by the secrecy, safety, and expedition of the passage.

Another desired to advertise the curious, that he had, for the advancement of true knowledge, contrived an optical instrument, by which those who laid out their industry on memorials of the changes of the wind, might observe the direction of the weathercocks on the hither side of the lunar world.

Another wished to be known as the author of an invention, by which cities or kingdoms might be made warm in winter by a single fire, a kettle, and pipe. Another had a vehicle by which a man might bid defiance to floods, and continue floating in an inundation, without any inconvenience, till the water should subside. JUSTICE considered these projects as of no importance but to their authors, and therefore scarcely condescended to

examine them; but TRUTH refused to admit them into the register.

Twenty different pretenders came in one hour to give notice of an universal medicine, by which all diseases might be cured or prevented, and life protracted beyond the age of NESTOR. But JUSTICE informed them, that one universal medicine was sufficient, and she would delay the notification till she saw who could longest preserve his own life.

A thousand other claims and offers were exhibited and examined. I remarked, among this mighty multitude, that, of intellectual advantages many had great exuberance, and few confessed any want; of every art there were a hundred professors for a single pupil; but of other attainments, such as riches, honours, and preferments, I found none that had too much, but thousands and ten thousands that thought themselves entitled to a larger dividend.

It often happened, that old misers, and women married at the close of life, advertised their want of children; nor was it uncommon for those who had a numerous offspring, to give notice of a son or daughter to be spared; but though appearances promised well upon both sides, the bargain seldom succeeded; for they soon lost their inclination to adopted children, and proclaimed their intentions to promote some scheme of public charity: a thousand proposals were immediately made, among which they hesitated, till death precluded the decision.

As I stood looking on this scene of confusion, TRUTH condescended to ask me, what was my busi-

ness at her office? I was struck with the unexpected question, and awaked by my efforts to answer it.

N° 106. SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 1751.

Opinionum commenta delet dies, naturæ judicia confirmat. CIC.

Time obliterates the fictions of opinion, and confirms the decisions of nature.

It is necessary to the success of flattery, that it be accommodated to particular circumstances or characters, and enter the heart on that side where the passions stand ready to receive it. A lady seldom listens with attention to any praise but that of her beauty; a merchant always expects to hear of his influence at the bank, his importance on the exchange, the height of his credit, and the extent of his traffick: and the author will scarcely be pleased without lamentations of the neglect of learning, the conspiracies against genius, and the slow progress of merit, or some praises of the magnanimity of those who encounter poverty and contempt in the cause of knowledge, and trust for the reward of their labours to the judgment and gratitude of posterity.

An assurance of unfading laurels, and immortal reputation, is the settled reciprocation of civility between amicable writers. To raise monumen

more durable than brass, and more conspicuous than pyramids, has been long the common boast of literature; but among the innumerable architects that erect columns to themselves, far the greater part, either for want of durable materials, or of art to dispose them, see their edifices perish as they are towering to completion, and those few that for a while attract the eye of mankind, are generally weak in the foundation, and soon sink by the saps of time.

No place affords a more striking conviction of the vanity of human hopes, than a publick library; for who can see the wall crowded on every side by mighty volumes, the works of laborious meditation, and accurate inquiry, now scarcely known but by the catalogue, and preserved only to increase the pomp of learning, without considering how many hours have been wasted in vain endeavours, how often imagination has anticipated the praises of futurity, how many statues have risen to the eye of vanity, how many ideal converts have elevated zeal, how often wit has exulted in the eternal infamy of his antagonists, and dogmatism has delighted in the gradual advances of his authority, the immutability of his decrees, and the perpetuity of his power.

> ——*Non unquam dedit*
> *Documenta fors majora, quam fragili loco*
> *Starent superbi.*
>
> Insulting chance ne'er call'd with louder voice,
> On swelling mortals to be proud no more.

Of the innumerable authors whose performances are thus treasured up in magnificent obscurity,

most are forgotton, because they never deserved to be remembered, and owed the honours which they once obtained, not to judgment or to genius, to labour or to art, but to the prejudice of faction, the stratagem of intrigue, or the servility of adulation.

Nothing is more common than to find men whose works are now totally neglected, mentioned with praises by their contemporaries, as the oracles of their age, and the legislators of science. Curiosity is naturally excited, their volumes after long inquiry are found, but seldom reward the labour of the search. Every period of time has produced these bubbles of artificial fame, which are kept up a while by the breath of fashion, and then break at once, and are annihilated. The learned often bewail the loss of ancient writers whose characters have survived their works; but perhaps, if we could now retrieve them, we should find them only the Granvilles, Montagues, Stepneys, and Sheffields of their time, and wonder by what infatuation or caprice they could be raised to notice.

It cannot, however, be denied, that many have sunk into oblivion, whom it were unjust to number with this despicable class. Various kinds of literary fame seem destined to various measures of duration. Some spread into exuberance with a very speedy growth, but soon wither and decay; some rise more slowly, but last long. Parnassus has its flowers of transient fragrance, as well as its oaks of towering height, and its laurels of eternal verdure.

Among those whose reputation is exhausted in a *short time by its own* luxuriance, are the writers

who take advantage of present incidents or characters which strongly interest the passions, and engage universal attention. It is not difficult to obtain readers, when we discuss a question which every one is desirous to understand, which is debated in every assembly, and has divided the nation into parties; or when we display the faults or virtues of him whose publick conduct has made almost every man his enemy or his friend. To the quick circulation of such productions all the motives of interest and vanity concur; the disputant enlarges his knowledge, the zealot animates his passion, and every man is desirous to inform himself concerning affairs so vehemently agitated and variously represented.

It is scarcely to be imagined, through how many subordinations of interest the ardour of party is diffused; and what multitudes fancy themselves affected by every satire or panegyrick on a man of eminence. Whoever has, at any time, taken occasion to mention him with praise or blame, whoever happens to love or hate any of his adherents, as he wishes to confirm his opinion, and to strengthen his party, will diligently peruse every paper from which he can hope for sentiments like his own. An object, however small in itself, if placed near to the eye, will engross all the rays of light; and a transaction, however trivial, swells into importance when it presses immediately on our attention. He that shall peruse the political pamphlets of any past reign, will wonder why they were so eagerly read, or so loudly praised. Many of the performances which had power to inflame factions, and fill a kingdom with confusion, have now very

little effect upon a frigid critick; and the time is coming, when the compositions of later hirelings shall lie equally despised. In proportion as those who write on temporary subjects are exalted above their merit at first, they are afterwards depressed below it; nor can the brightest elegance of diction, or most artful subtilty of reasoning, hope for much esteem from those whose regard is no longer quickened by curiosity or pride.

It is indeed the fate of controvertists, even when they contend for philosophical or theological truth, to be soon laid aside and slighted. Either the question is decided, and there is no more place for doubt and opposition; or mankind despair of understanding it, and grow weary of disturbance, content themselves with quiet ignorance, and refuse to be harassed with labours which they have no hopes of recompensing with knowledge.

The authors of new discoveries may surely expect to be reckoned among those whose writings are secure of veneration: yet it often happens that the general reception of a doctrine obscures the books in which it was delivered. When any tenet is generally received and adopted as an incontrovertible principle, we seldom look back to the arguments upon which it was first established, or can bear that tediousness of deduction, and multiplicity of evidence, by which its author was forced to reconcile it to prejudice, and fortify it in the weakness of novelty against obstinacy and envy.

It is well known how much of our philosophy is derived from Boyle's discovery of the qualities of the air; yet of those who now adopt or enlarge his theory, *very few* have read the detail of his

experiments. His name is, indeed, reverenced; but his works are neglected; we are contented to know, that he conquered his opponents, without inquiring what cavils were produced against him, or by what proofs they were confuted.

Some writers apply themselves to studies boundless and inexhaustible, as experiments in natural philosophy. These are always lost in successive compilations as new advances are made, and former observations become more familiar. Others spend their lives in remarks on language, or explanations of antiquities, and only afford materials for lexicographers and commentators, who are themselves overwhelmed by subsequent collectors that equally destroy the memory of their predecessors by amplification, transposition, or contraction. Every new system of nature gives birth to a swarm of expositors, whose business is to explain and illustrate it, and who can hope to exist no longer than the founder of their sect preserves his reputation.

There are, indeed, few kinds of composition from which an author, however learned or ingenious, can hope a long continuance of fame. He who has carefully studied human nature, and can well describe it, may with most reason flatter his ambition. Bacon among all his pretensions to the regard of posterity, seems to have pleased himself chiefly with his Essays, "which come home to men's "business and bosoms," and of which, therefore, he declares his expectation that they "will live as long "as books last." It may, however satisfy an honest and benevolent mind to have been useful, though less conspicious; nor will he that extends his hope to *higher rewards*, be so much anxious to obtain

praise, as to discharge the duty which Providence assigns him.

N° 107. TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 1751.

Alternis igitur contendere versibus ambo
Cœpere: alternos musæ meminisse volebant.

VIRG.

On themes alternate now the swains recite;
The muses in alternate themes delight.

ELPHINSTON.

Among the various censures which the unavoidable comparison of my performances with those of my predecessors has produced, there is none more general than that of uniformity. Many of my readers remark the want of those changes of colours, which formerly fed the attention with unexhausted novelty, and of that intermixture of subjects, or alternation of manner, by which other writers relieved weariness, and awakened expectation.

I have, indeed, hitherto avoided the practice of uniting gay and solemn subjects in the same paper, because it seems absurd for an author to counteract himself, to press at once with equal force upon both parts of the intellectual balance, or give medicines, which, like the double poison of Dryden, destroy the *force of one* another. I have endeavoured *sometimes* to divert, and sometimes to

elevate; but have imagined it an useless attempt to disturb merriment by solemnity, or interrupt seriousness by drollery. Yet I shall this day publish two letters of very different tendency, which I hope, like tragi-comedy, may chance to please even when they are not critically approved.

TO THE RAMBLER.

DEAR SIR,

THOUGH, as my mamma tells me, I am too young to talk at the table, I have great pleasure in listening to the conversation of learned men, especially when they discourse of things which I do not understand; and have therefore been of late particularly delighted with many disputes about the alteration of the style, which, they say, is to be made by act of parliament.

One day when my mamma was gone out of the room, I asked a very great scholar what the style was? He told me, he was afraid, I should hardly understand him when he informed me, that it was the stated and established method of computing time. It was not indeed likely that I should understand him; for I never yet knew time computed in my life, nor can imagine why we should be at so much trouble to count what we cannot keep. He did not tell me whether we are to count the time past, or the time to come; but I have considered them both myself, and think it as foolish to count time that is gone, as money that is spent; and as for the time which is to come, it only seems farther off by counting; and therefore when any

pleasure is promised me, I always think of the time as little as I can.

I have since listened very attentively to every one that talked upon this subject, of whom the greater part seem not to understand it better than myself; for though they often hint how much the nation has been mistaken, and rejoice that we are at last growing wiser than our ancestors, I have never been able to discover from them, that any body has died sooner or been married latter for counting time wrong; and therefore I began to fancy, that there was a great bustle with little consequence.

At last two friends of my pappa, Mr. Cycle and Mr. Starlight, being, it seems, both of high learning, and able to make an almanack, began to talk about the new style. Sweet Mr. Starlight—— I am sure I shall love his name as long as I live; for he told Cycle roundly, with a fierce look, that we should never be right without a year of confusion. Dear Mr. Rambler, did you ever hear any thing so charming? a whole year of confusion! When there has been a rout at mamma's, I have thought one night of confusion worth a thousand nights of rest; and if I can but see a year of confusion, a whole year of cards in one room, and dancings in another, here a feast, and there a masquerade, and plays, and coaches, and hurries, and messages, and milliners, and raps at the door, and visits, and frolicks, and new fashions, I shall not care what they do with the rest of the time, nor whether they count it by the old style or the new; for I am resolved to break loose from the nursery in the tumult, and *play my* part among the rest; and it

will be strange if I cannot get a husband and a chariot in the year of confusion.

Cycle, who is neither so young nor so handsome as Starlight, very gravely maintained, that all the perplexity may be avoided by leaping over eleven days in the reckoning; and indeed, if it should come only to this, I think the new stile is a delightful thing; for my mamma says I shall go to court when I am sixteen, and if they can but contrive often to leap over eleven days together, the months of restraint will soon be at an end. It is strange, that with all the plots that have been laid against time, they could never kill it by act of parliament before. Dear Sir, if you have any vote or interest, get them but for once to destroy eleven months, and then I shall be as old as some married ladies. But this is desired only if you think they will not comply with Mr. Starlight's scheme; for nothing surely could please me like a year of confusion, when I shall no longer be fixed this hour to my pen and the next to my needle, or wait at home for the dancing-master one day, and the next for the music-master, but run from ball to ball, and from drum to drum; and spend all my time without tasks, and without account, and go out without telling whither, and come home without regard to prescribed hours, or family-rules.

I am, SIR,

Your humble Servant,

PROPERANTIA.

MR RAMBLER,

I WAS seized this morning with an unusual pensiveness, and finding that books only served to heighten it, took a ramble into the fields, in hopes of relief and invigoration from the keenness of the air and brightness of the sun.

As I wandered wrapped up in thought, my eyes were struck with the hospital for the reception of deserted infants, which I surveyed with pleasure, till by a natural train of sentiment, I began to reflect on the fate of the mothers. For to what shelter can they fly? Only to the arms of their betrayer, which perhaps are now no longer open to receive them; and then how quick must be the transition from deluded virtue to shameless guilt, and from shameless guilt to hopeless wretchedness.

The anguish that I felt left me no rest, till I had, by your means, addressed myself to the publick on behalf of those forlorn creatures, the women of the town; whose misery here might satisfy the most rigorous censor, and whose participation of our common nature might surely induce us to endeavour, at least, their preservation from eternal punishment.

These were all once, if not virtuous, at least innocent; and might still have continued blameless and easy, but for the arts and insinuations of those whose rank, fortune, or education, furnished them with means to corrupt or to delude them. Let the libertine reflect a moment on the situation of that woman, who, being forsaken by her betrayer is reduced to the necessity of turning prostitute for

bread, and judge of the enormity of his guilt by the evils which it produces.

It cannot be doubted but that numbers follow this dreadful course of life, with shame, horror and regret; but where can they hope for refuge; "The world is not their friend, nor the world's "law." Their sighs, and tears, and groans, are criminal in the eye of their tyrants, the bully and the bawd, who fatten on their misery, and threaten them with want or a gaol, if they shew the least design of escaping from their bondage.

"To wipe all tears from off all faces," is a task too hard for mortals; but to alleviate misfortunes is often within the most limited power: yet the opportunities which every day affords of relieving the most wretched of human beings are overlooked and neglected, with equal disregard of policy and goodness.

There are places, indeed, set apart, to which these unhappy creatures may resort, when the diseases of incontinence seize upon them; but if they obtain a cure to what are they reduced? Either to return with the small remains of beauty to their former guilt, or perish in the streets with nakedness and hunger?

How frequently have the gay and thoughtless, in their evening frolicks, seen a band of these miserable females, covered with rags, shivering with cold and pining with hunger; and, without either pitying their calamities, or reflecting upon the cruelty of those who perhaps first seduced them by caresses of fondness, or magnificence of promises, go on to reduce others to the same wretchedness by the same means?

To stop the increase of this deplorable multitude, is undoubtedly the first and most pressing consideration. To prevent evil is the great end of government, the end for which vigilance and severity are properly employed. But surely those whom passion or interest have already depraved, have some claim to compassion, from beings equally frail and fallible with themselves. Nor will they long groan in their present afflictions, if none were to refuse them relief, but those that owe their exemption from the same distress only to their wisdom and their virtue.

I am, &c.

AMICUS.

N° 108. SATURDAY, MARCH 30 175

Sapere aude,
Incipe. Vivendi recte qui prorogat horam,
Rusticus expectat dum defluat amnis: at ille
Labitur, & labetur in omne volubilis ævum.
HOR.

Begin, be bold, and venture to be wise;
He who defers his work from day to day,
Does on a river's bank expecting stay,
Till the whole stream, which stopp'd him, should be gone,
That runs, and as it runs, for ever will run on.
COWLEY.

An ancient poet, unreasonably discontented at present state of things, which his system of o nions obliged him to represent in its worst fo has observed of the earth, "that its greater p "is covered by the uninhabitable ocean; that "the rest some is encumbered with naked mou "ains, and some lost under barren sands; so "scorched with unintermitted heat, and so "petrified with perpetual frost; so that onl "few regions remain for the production of fru "the pasture of cattle, and the accommodatio "man."

The same observation may be transferred to time allotted us in our present state. When have deducted all that is absorbed in sleep, all t is inevitably appropriated to the demands of ture, or irresistably engrossed by the tyranny *custom; all that passes* in regulating the su

ficial decorations of life, or is given up in the reciprocations of civility to the disposal of others; all that is torn from us by the violence of disease, or stolen imperceptibly away by lassitude and languor; we shall find that part of our duration very small of which we can truly call ourselves masters, or which we can spend wholly at our own choice. Many of our hours are lost in a rotation of petty cares, in a constant recurrence of the same employments; many of our provisions for ease or happiness are always exhausted by the present day; and a great part of our existence serves no other purpose, than that of enabling us to enjoy the rest.

Of the few moments which are left in our disposal it may reasonably be expected, that we should be so frugal, as to let none of them slip from us without some equivalent; and perhaps it might be found, that as the earth, however straitened by rocks and waters, is capable of producing more than all its inhabitants are able to consume, our lives, though much contracted by incidental distraction, would yet afford us a large space vacant to the exercise of reason and virtue; that we want not time but diligence, for great performances; and that we squander much of our allowance, even while we think it sparing and insufficient.

This natural and necessary comminution of our lives, perhaps, often makes us insensible of the negligence with which we suffer them to slide away. We never consider ourselves as possessed at once of time sufficient for any great design, and therefore indulge ourselves in fortuitous amuse-

ments. We think it unnecessary to take an account of a few supernumerary moments, which, however employed, could have produced little advantage, and which were exposed to a thousand chances of disturbance and interruption.

It is observable, that either by nature or by habit, our faculties are fitted to images of a certain extent, to which we adjust great things by division, and little things by accumulation. Of extensive surfaces we can only take a survey, as the parts succeed one another; and atoms we cannot perceive, till they are united into masses. Thus we break the vast periods of time into centuries and years; and thus, if we would know the amount of moments, we must agglomerate them into days and weeks.

The proverbial oracles of our parsimonious ancestors have informed us, that the fatal waste of fortune is by small expences, by the profusion of sums too little singly to alarm our caution, and which we never suffer ourselves to consider together. Of the same kind is the prodigality of life; he that hopes to look back hereafter with satisfaction upon past years, must learn to know the present value of single minutes, and endeavour to let no particle of time fall useless to the ground.

It is usual for those who are advised to the attainment of any new qualification, to look upon themselves as required to change the general course of their conduct, to dismiss business, and exclude pleasure, and to devote their days and nights to a particular attention. But all common degrees of excellence are attainable at a lower price: he *that should steadily* and resolutely assign to any

: or language those interstitial vacancies intervene in the most crowded variety of on or employment, would find every day, radiations of knowledge, and discover how more is to be hoped from frequency and per- ice, than from violent efforts and sudden ; efforts which are soon remitted when they ter difficulty, and desires which, if they are ed too often, will shake off the authority of , and range capriciously from one object to r.

disposition to defer every important de- a time of leisure, and a state of settled uni- , proceeds generally from afalse estimate of nan powers. If we except those gigantick pendous intelligences who are said to grasp m by intuition, and bound forward from ics of conclusions to another, without re- teps through intermediate propositions, the uccessful students make their advances in dge by short flights, between each of which id may lie at rest. For every single act of sion a short time is sufficient ; and it is cessary, that whenever that time is afforded, be well employed.

minds will be long confined to servile and is meditation ; and when a successful at- knowledge has been made, the student re- himself with the contemplation of his con- nd forbears another incursion, till the new d truth has become familiar, and his curio- l upon him for fresh gratifications. Whe- e time of intermission is spent in company, itude, *in necessary* business, or in voluntary

levities, the understanding is equally abstra
from the object of inquiry; but, perhaps, if
detained by occupations less pleasing, it ret
again to study with greater alacrity, than wh
is glutted with ideal pleasures, and surfeited
intemperance of application. He that will
suffer himself to be discouraged by fancied in
sibilities, may sometimes find his abilities invig
ed by the necessity of exerting them in sho
tervals, as the force of a current is increased b
contraction of its channel.

From some cause like this, it has probably
ceeded, that among those who have contribut
the advancement of learning, many have ris
eminence in opposition to all the obstacles w
external circumstances could place in their
amidst the tumult of business, the distresses o
verty, or the dissipations of a wandering and u
tled state. A great part of the life of Era
was one continual peregrination; ill supplied
the gifts of fortune, and led from city to city
from kingdom to kingdom by the hopes of pa
and preferment, hopes which always flattere
always deceived him: he yet found means b
shaken constancy, and a vigilant improveme
those hours, which, in the midst of the most
less activity will remain unengaged, to write
than another in the same condition would have
ed to read. Compelled by want to attend
and solicitation, and so much versed in con
life, that he has transmitted to us the most
fect delineation of the manners of his age, he
ed to his knowledge of the world, such applic
to books, that he will stand for ever in the first

heroes. How this proficiency was ob-
sufficiently discovers, by informing us,
raise of Folly, one of his most celebrated
ices, was composed by him on the road
; *ne totum illud tempus quo equo fuit in-illiteratis fabulis tereretur*, lest the hours
was obliged to spend on horseback should
away without regard to literature.
lian philosopher expressed in his motto,
was his estate; an estate indeed, which
ice nothing without cultivation, but will
undantly repay the labours of industry,
y the most extensive desires, if no part of
fered to lie waste by negligence, to be
with noxious plants, or laid out for show
n for use.

N° 109. TUESDAY, APRIL 2, 1751.

Gratum est, quod patriæ civem populoque dedisti,
Si faces ut patriæ sit idoneus, utilis agris,
Utilis et bellorum, et pacis rebus agendis.
Plurimum enim intererit quibus artibus, et quibus
Hunc tu moribus instituas.

JUV.

Grateful the gift! a member to the state,
If you that member useful shall create;
Train'd both to war, and when the war shall cease,
As fond, as fit t'improve the arts of peace.
For much it boots which way you train your boy,
The hopeful object of your future joy.

ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH you seem to have taken a view sufficiently extensive of the miseries of life, and have employed much of your speculation on mournful subjects, you have not yet exhausted the whole stock of human infelicity. There is still a species of wretchedness which escapes your observation, though it might supply you with many sage remarks and salutary cautions.

I cannot but imagine the start of attention awakened by this welcome hint; and at this instant see the Rambler snuffing his candle, rubbing his spectacles, stirring his fire, locking out interruption, and setting himself in his easy chair, that he may enjoy a new calamity without disturbance.

For, whether it be that continued sickness or misfortune has acquainted you only with the bitterness of being, or that you imagine none but yourself able to discover what I suppose has been seen and felt by all the inhabitants of the world; whether you intend your writings as antidotal to the levity and merriment with which your rivals endeavour to attract the favour of the publick; or fancy that you have some particular powers of dolorous declamation, and *warble out your groans* with uncommon elegance or energy; it is certain, that whatever be your subject, melancholy for the most part bursts in upon your speculation, your gaiety is quickly overcast, and though your readers may be flattered with hopes of pleasantry, they are seldom dismissed but with heavy hearts.

That I may therefore gratify you with an imitation of your own syllables of sadness, I will inform you that I was condemned by some disastrous influence to be an only son, born to the apparent prospect of a large fortune, and allotted to my parents at that time of life when satiety of common diversions allows the mind to indulge parental affection with greater intenseness. My birth was celebrated by the tenants with feasts, and dances, and bagpipes; congratulations were sent from every family within ten miles round; and my parents discovered in my first cries such tokens of future virtue and understanding, that they declared themselves determined to devote the remaining part of life to my happiness and the increase of their estate.

The abilities of my father and mother were not perceptibly unequal, and education had given

neither much advantage over the other. They had both kept good company, rattled in chariots, glittered in play-houses, and danced at court, and were both expert in the games that were in their time called in as auxiliaries against the intrusion of thought.

When there is such a parity between two persons associated for life, the dejection which the husband, if he be not completely stupid, must always suffer for want of superiority, sinks him to submissiveness. My mamma therefore governed the family without controul; and except that my father still retained some authority in the stables, and now and then, after a supernumerary bottle, broke a looking-glass or china dish to prove his sovereignty, the whole course of the year was regulated by her direction, the servants received from her all their orders, and the tenants were continued or dismissed at her discretion.

She therefore thought herself entitled to the superintendance of her son's education; and when my father, at the instigation of the parson, faintly proposed that I should be sent to school, very positively told him, that she would not suffer so fine a child to be ruined; that she never knew any boy at a grammar-school that could come into a room without blushing, or sit at the table without some awkward uneasiness; that they were always putting themselves into danger by boisterous plays, or vitiating their behaviour with mean company; and that, for her part, she would rather follow me to the grave, than see me tear my clothes, and hang down my head, and sneak about with dirty shoes

and blotted fingers, my hair unpowdered, and my hat uncocked.

My father, who had no other end in his proposal than to appear wise and manly, soon acquiesced, since I was not to live by my learning; for indeed he had known very few students that had not some stiffness in their manner. They therefore agreed, that a domestick tutor should be procured, and hired an honest gentleman of mean conversation and narrow sentiments, but whom, having passed the common forms of literary education, they implicitly concluded qualified to teach all that was to be learned from a scholar. He thought himself sufficiently exalted by being placed at the same table with his pupil, and had no other view than to perpetuate his felicity by the utmost flexibility of submission to all my mother's opinions and caprices. He frequently took away my book, lest I should mope with too much application, charged me never to write without turning up my ruffles, and generally brushed my coat before he dismissed me into the parlour.

He had no occasion to complain of too burdensome an employment: for my mother very judiciously considered, that I was not likely to grow politer in his company, and suffered me not to pass any more time in his apartment than my lesson required. When I was summoned to my task, she enjoined me not to get any of my tutor's ways, who was seldom mentioned before me but for practices to be avoided. I was every moment admonished not to lean on my chair, cross my legs, or swing my hands like my tutor; and once my mother very *seriously deliberated* upon his total dismission, be-

cause I began, she said, to learn his manner of sticking on my hat, and had his bend in my shoulders, and his totter in my gait.

Such, however, was her care, that I escaped all these depravities; and when I was only twelve years old, had rid myself of every appearence of childish diffidence. I was celebrated round the country for the petulance of my remarks, and the quickness of my replies; and many scholar five years older than myself have I dashed into confusion by the steadiness of my countenance, silenced by my readiness of repartee, and tortured with envy by the address with which I picked up a fan, presented a snuff-box, or received an empty tea-cup.

At fourteen I was completely skilled in all the niceties of dress, and I could not only enumerate all the variety of silks, and distinguish the product of a French loom, but dart my eyes through a numerous company, and observe every deviation from the reigning mode. I was universally skilful in all the changes of expensive finery; but as every one, they say, has something to which he is particularly born, was eminently knowing in Brussels lace.

The next year saw me advanced to the trust and power of adjusting the ceremonial of an assembly. All received their partners from my hand, and to me every stranger applied for introduction. My heart now disdained the instructions of a tutor, who was rewarded with a small annuity for life, and left me qualified, in my own opinion, to govern myself.

In a short time I came to London, and as my

father was well known among the higher classes of life, soon obtained admission to the most splendid assemblies and most crowded card-tables. Here I found myself universally caressed and applauded: the ladies praised the fancy of my clothes, the beauty of my form, and the softness of my voice; endeavoured in every place to force themselves to my notice; and invited by a thousand oblique solicitations my attendance to the playhouse, and my salutations in the park. I was now happy to the utmost extent of my conception: I passed every morning in dress, every afternoon in visits, and every night in some select assemblies, where neither care nor knowledge were suffered to molest us.

After a few years, however, these delights became familiar, and I had leisure to look round me with more attention. I then found that my flatterers had very little power to relieve the languor of satiety, or recreate weariness, by varied amusement; and therefore endeavoured to enlarge the sphere of my pleasures, and to try what satisfaction might be found in the society of men. I will not deny the mortification with which I perceived, that every man whose name I had heard mentioned with respect, received me with a kind of tenderness nearly bordering on compassion; and that those whose reputation was not well established, thought it necessary to justify their understandings, by treating me with contempt. One of these witlings elevated his crest, by asking me in a full coffee-house the price of patches; and another whispered that he wondered why Miss Frisk did not keep me that afternoon to watch her squirrel.

When I found myself thus hunted from all masculine conversation by those who were themselves barely admitted, I returned to the ladies, and resolved to dedicate my life to their service and their pleasure. But I find that I have now lost my charms. Of those with whom I entered the gay world, some are married, some have retired, and some have so much changed their opinion, that they scarcely pay any regard to my civilities, if there is any other man in the place. The new flight of beauties to whom I have made my addresses, suffer me to pay the treat, and then titter with boys. So that I now find myself welcome only to a few grave ladies, who, unacquainted with all that gives either use or dignity to life, are content to pass their hours between their bed and their cards, without esteem from the old, or reverence from the young.

I cannot but think, Mr Rambler, that I have reason to complain; for surely the females ought to pay some regard to the age of him whose youth was passed in endeavours to please them. They that encourage folly in the boy, have no right to punish it in the man. Yet I find, that though they lavish their first fondness upon pertness and gaiety, they soon transfer their regard to other qualities, and ungratefully abandon their adorers to dream out their last years in stupidity and contempt.

I am, &c.

FLORENTULUS.

N° 110. SATURDAY, APRIL 6, 1751.

At nobis vitæ dominum quærentibus unum
Lux iter est, et clara dies, et gratia simplex,
Spem sequimur, gradimur que fide, fruimurque futuris,
Ad quæ non veniunt præsentis gaudia vitæ,
Nec currunt pariter capta, et capienda voluptas.

PRUDENTIUS.

We through the maze of life one Lord obey,
Whose light and grace unerring, lead the way.
By hope and faith secure of future bliss,
Gladly the joys of present life we miss:
For baffled mortals still attempt in vain,
Present and future bliss at once to gain.

F. LEWIS.

THAT to please the Lord and Father of the universe, is the supreme interest of created and dependent beings, as it is easily proved, has been universally confessed; and since all rational agents are conscious of having neglected or violated the duties prescribed to them, the fear of being rejected or punished by God has always burdened the human mind. The expiation of crimes, and renovation of the forfeited hopes of divine favour, therefore constitutes a large part of every religion.

The various methods of propitiation and atonement which fear and folly have dictated, or artifice and interest tolerated in the different parts of the world, however they may sometimes reproach or degrade humanity, at least shew the general consent of all ages and nations in their opinion of the placability of the divine nature. That God will for

give, may, indeed, be established as the first and fundamental truth of religion; for though the knowledge of his existence is the origin of philosophy, yet, without the belief of his mercy, it would have little influence upon our moral conduct. There could be no prospect of enjoying the protection or regard of him, whom the least deviation from rectitude made inexorable for ever; and every man would naturally withdraw his thoughts from the contemplation of a Creator, whom he must consider as a governor too pure to be pleased, and too severe to be pacified; as an enemy infinitely wise and infinitely powerful, whom he could neither deceive, escape, nor resist.

Where there is no hope, there can be no endeavour. A constant and unfailing obedience is above the reach of terrestrial diligence; and therefore the progress of life could only have been the natural descent of negligent despair from crime to crime, had not the universal persuasion of forgiveness to be obtained by proper means of reconciliation, recalled those to the paths of virtue whom their passions had solicited aside; and animated to new attempts and firmer perseverance those whom difficulty had discouraged, or negligence surprised.

In times and regions so disjoined from each other, that there can scarcely be imagined any communication of sentiments either by commerce or tradition, has prevailed a general and uniform expectation of propitiating God by corporal austerities, of anticipating his vengeance by voluntary inflictions, and appeasing his justice by a speedy and cheerful submission to a less penalty when a greater is incurred.

rporated minds will always feel some inclina-
vards exterior acts and ritual observances.
ot represented by sensible objects are fleet-
iable, and evanescent. We are not able to
the degree of conviction which operated at
icular time upon our own thoughts, but as it
led by some certain and definite effect. He
iews his life in order to determine the pro-
of his acceptance with God, if he could
ablish the necessary proportion between
nd sufferings, might securely rest upon his
ance of the expiation; but while safety re-
e reward only of mental purity, he is al-
raid lest he should decide too soon in his
our, lest he should not have felt the pang
ontrition; lest he should mistake satiety
tation, or imagine that his passions are sub-
en they are only sleeping.

this natural and reasonable diffidence
humble and timorous piety, a disposition
and penance with repentance, to repose on
eterminations, and to receive from some
entence the stated and regular assignment
ciliatory pain. We are never willing to be
resource: we seek in the knowlege of
succour for our own ignorance, and are
trust any that will undertake to direct us
have confidence in ourselves.

lesire to ascertain by some outward marks
of the soul, and this willingness to calm
ience by some settled method, have pro-
s they are diversified in their effects by
empers and principles, most of the disqui-

sitions and rules, the doubts and solutions, that have embraced the doctrine of repentance, and perplexed tender and flexible minds with innumerable scruples concerning the necessary measures of sorrow, and adequate degrees of self-abhorrence; and these rules corrupted by fraud, or debased by credulity have, by the common resiliency of the mind from one extreme to another, incited others to an open contempt of all subsidiary ordinances, all prudential caution, and the whole discipline of regulated piety.

Repentance, however difficult to be practised, is, if it be explained without superstition, easily understood. *Repentance is the relinquiſhment of any practice, from the conviction that it has offended God.* Sorrow, and fear, and anxiety, are properly not parts, but adjuncts of repentance; yet they are too closely connected with it, to be easily separated; for they not only mark its sincerity, but promote its efficacy.

No man commits any act of neglience or obstinacy, by which his safety or happiness in this world is endangered, without feeling the pungency of remorse. He who is fully convinced that he suffers by his own failure, can never forbear to trace back his miscarriage to its first cause, to image to himself a contrary behaviour, and to form involuntary resolutions against the like fault, even when he knows that he shall never again have the power of committing it. Danger, considered as imminent, naturally produces such trepidations of impatience as leave all human means of safety behind them; he that has once caught an alarm of terror, is every moment seized with useless

anxieties, adding one security to another, trembling with sudden doubts, and distracted by the perpetual occurrence of new expedients. If, therefore, he whose crimes have deprived him of the favour of God, can reflect upon his conduct without disturbance, or can at will banish the reflection; if he who considers himself as suspended over the abyss of eternal perdition only by the thread of life, which must soon part by its own weakness, and which the wing of every minute may divide, can cast his eyes round him without shuddering with horror, or panting with security; what can he judge of himself, but that he is not yet awakened to sufficient conviction, since every loss is more lamented than the loss of the divine favour, and every danger more dreadful than the danger of final condemnation?

Retirement from the cares and pleasures of the world has been often recommended as useful to repentance. This at least is evident, that every one retires, whenever ratiocination and recollection are required on other occasions: and surely the retrospect of life, the disentanglement of actions complicated with innumerable circumstances, and diffused in various relations, the discovery of the primary movements of the heart, and the extirpation of lusts and appetites deeply rooted and widely spread, may be allowed to demand some secession from sport and noise, and business and folly. Some suspension of common affairs, some pause of temporal pain and pleasure, is doubtless necessary to him that deliberates for eternity, who is forming the only plan in which miscarriage

cannot be repaired, and examining the only q
tion in which mistake cannot be rectified.

Austerities and mortifications are means
which the mind is invigorated and roused,
which the attractions of pleasure are interrup
and the chains of sensuality are broken. I
observed by one of the fathers, that he who
strains himself in the use of things lawful will n
encroach upon things forbidden. Abstinenc
nothing more, is at least a cautious retreat f
the utmost verge of permission, and confers
security which cannot be reasonably hoped
him that dares always hover over the preci
of destruction, or delights to approach the p
sure which he knows it fatal to partake. Au
rity is the proper antidote to indulgence;
diseases of mind as well as body are cured by
traries, and to contraries we should readily l
recourse, if we dreaded guilt as we dread pai

The completion and sum of repentance
change of life. That sorrow which dictates
caution, that fear which does not quicken ou
cape, that austerity which fails to rectify ou
fections, are vain and unavailing. But sor
and terror must naturally precede reformation
what other cause can produce it? He, therefo
that feels himself alarmed by his conscience,
xious for the attainment of a better state,
afflicted by the memory of his past faults,
justly conclude, that the great work of repent
is begun, and hope by retirement and prayer,
natural and religious means of strengthening
conviction, to impress upon his mind such a s
of the divine presence, as may overpower the b

dishments of secular delights, and enable him to advance from one degree of holiness to another, till death shall set him free from doubt and contest, misery and contemplation.

What better can we do than prostrate fall
Before him reverent; and there confess
Humbly our faults, and pardon beg, with tears
Watering the ground, and with out sighs the air
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
Of sorrow unfeign'd and humiliation meek?

N° 111. TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 1751.

Φρονιν γαρ οι ταχυις, υκ σαφαλυις.

SOPHOC.

Disaster always waits on early wit.

IT has been observed, by long experience, that late springs produce the greatest plenty. The delay of blooms and fragrance, of verdure and breezes, is for the most part liberally recompensed by the exuberance and fecundity of the ensuing seasons; the blossoms which lie concealed till the year is advanced, and the sun is high, escape those chilling blasts, and nocturnal frosts, which are often fatal to early luxuriance, prey upon the first smiles of vernal beauty, destroy the feeble principles of vegetable life, intercept the fruit in the gem, and beat down the flowers unopened to the ground.

I am afraid there is little hope of persu the young and sprightly part of my readers, whom the spring naturally forces my atte to learn from the great process of nature, t ference between diligence and hurry, be speed and precipitation; to prosecute the signs with calmness, to watch the concurre opportunity, and endeavour to find the luck ment which they cannot make. Youth time of enterprize and hope; having yet no sion of comparing our force with any opp power, we naturally form presumptions in ou favour, and imagine that obstruction and ir ment will give way before us. The first re rather inflame vehemence than teach prude brave and generous mind is long before it su its own weakness, or submits to sap the culties which it expected to subdue by Before disappointments have enforced the d of philosophy, we believe it in our pow shorten the interval between the first cause a last effect; we laugh at the timorous del brooding industry, and fancy, that, by incr the fire, we can at pleasure accelerate the jection.

At our entrance into the world, when and vigiour give us fair promises of time sul for the regular maturation of our schemes, long enjoyment of our acquisitions, we are to seize the present moment; we pluck gratification within our reach, without suffe to ripen into perfection, and crowd all the ties of delight into a narrow compass; bu seldom fails to change our conduct; we

negligent of time in proportion as we have less remaining, and suffer the last part of life to steal from us in languid preparations for future undertakings, or slow approaches to remote advantages, in weak hopes of some fortuitous occurence, or drowsy equilibrations of undetermined counsel. Whether it be that the aged, having tasted the pleasures of man's condition, and found them delusive, become less anxious for their attainment, or that frequent miscarriages have depressed them to despair, and frozen them to inactivity; or that death shocks them more as it advances upon them, they are afraid to remind themselves of their decay, or to discover to their own hearts, that the time of trifling is past.

A perpetual conflict with natural desires seems to be the lot of our present state. In youth we require something of the tardiness and frigidity of age; and in age we must labour to recal the fire and impetuosity of youth; in youth we must learn to expect, and in age to enjoy.

The torment of expectation is indeed not easily to be borne, at a time when every idea of gratification fires the blood, and flashes on the fancy; when the heart is vacant to every fresh form of delight, and has no rival engagements to withdraw it from the importunities of a new desire. Yet since the fear of missing what we seek, must always be proportionable to the happiness expected from possessing it, the passions, even in this tempestuous state, might be somewhat moderated by frequent inculcation of the mischief of temerity, and the hazard *of losing* that which we endeavour *to seize before our time.*

He that too early aspires to honours, must resolve to encounter not only the opposition of interest, but the malignity of envy. He that is too eager to be rich, generally endangers his fortune in wild adventures, and uncertain projects; and he that hastens too speedily to reputation, often raises his character by artifices and fallacies, decks himself in colours which quickly fade, or in plumes which accident may shake off, or competition pluck away.

The danger of early eminence has been extended by some, even to the gifts of nature; and an opinion has been long conceived, that quickness of invention, accuracy of judgment, or extent of knowledge, appearing before the usual time, presage a short life. Even those who are less inclined to form general conclusions, from instances which by their own nature must be rare, have yet been inclined to prognosticate no suitable progress from the first sallies of rapid wit; but have observed, that after a short effort they either loiter or faint, and suffer themselves to be surpassed by the even and regular perseverence of slower understandings.

It frequently happens that applause abates diligence. Whosoever finds himself to have performed more than was demanded, will be contented to spare the labour on necessary performances, and sit down to enjoy at ease his superfluities of honour. He whom success has made confident of his abilities, quickly claims the privilege of negligence, and looks contemptuously on the gradual advances of a rival, whom he imagines himself able to leave behind whenever he shall again summon his force to the contest. But long intervals of

pleasure dissipate attention, and weaken constancy. Nor is it easy for him that has sunk from diligence into sloth, to rouse out of his lethargy, to recollect his notions, rekindle his curiosity, and engage with his former ardour in the toils of study.

Even that friendship which intends the reward of genius, too often tends to obstruct it. The pleasure of being carressed, distinguished, and admired, easily seduces the student from literary solitude. He is ready to follow the call which summons him to hear his own praise, and which, perhaps, at once flatters his appetite with certainty of pleasures, and his ambition with hopes of patronage; pleasures which he conceives inexhaustible, and hopes which he has not yet learned to distrust.

These evils, indeed, are by no means to be imputed to nature, or considered as inseparable from an early display of uncommon abilities. They may be certainly escaped by prudence and resolution, and must therefore be recounted rather as consolations to those who are less liberally endowed, than as discouragements to such as are born with uncommon qualities. Beauty is well known to draw after it the persecutions of impertinence, to incite the artifices of envy, and to raise the flames of unlawful love; yet among the ladies whom prudence or modesty have made most eminent, who has ever complained of the inconveniencies of an amiable form? or would have purchased safety by the loss of charms?

Neither grace of person, nor vigour of understanding, are to be regarded otherwise than as blessings, as *means* of happiness indulged by the

Supreme Benefactor; for the advantages of either may be lost by too much eagerness to obtain them. A thousand beauties in their first blossom, by an imprudent exposure to the open world, have suddenly withered at the blast of infamy; and men who might have subjected new regions to the empire of learning, have been lured by the praise of their first productions from academical retirement, and wasted their days in vice and dependence. The virgin who too soon aspires to celebrity and conquest, perishes by childish vanity, ignorant credulity, or guiltless indiscretion. The genius who catches at laurels and preferment before his time, mocks the hopes he had excited, and loses those years which might have been most usefully employed, the years of youth, of spirit, and vivacity.

It is one of the innumerable absurdities of pride that we are never more impatient of direction, than in that part of life when we need it most; we are in haste to meet enemies whom we have not strength to overcome, and to undertake tasks which we cannot perform: and as he that once miscarries does not easily persuade mankind to favour another attempt, an ineffectual struggle for fame is often followed by perpetual obscurity.

N° 112. SATURDAY, APRIL 13, 1751.

In mea vesanas habui dispendia vires,
Et valui pœnas fortis in ipsa meas.

OVID.

Of strength pernicious to myself I boast:
The pow'rs I have were giv'n me to my cost.

F. LEWIS.

We are taught by Celsus, that health is best preserved by avoiding settled habits of life, and deviating sometimes into slight aberrations from the laws of medicine; by varying the proportions of food and exercise, interrupting the successions of rest and labour, and mingling hardships with indulgence. The body, long accustomed to stated quantites and uniform periods, is disordered by the smallest irregularity; and since we cannot adjust every day by the balance or barometer, it is fit sometimes to depart from rigid accuracy, that we may be able to comply with necessary affairs, or strong inclinations. He that too long observes nice punctualities, condemns himself to voluntary imbecility, and will not long escape the miseries of disease.

The same laxity of regimen is equally necessary to intellectual health, and to a perpetual susceptibility of occasional pleasure. Long confinement to the same company, which perhaps similitude of taste brought first together, quickly contracts his

faculties, and makes a thousand things offensive that are in themselves indifferent; a man accustomed to hear only the echo of his own sentiments, soon bars all the common avenues of delight, and has no part in the general gratifications of mankind.

In things which are not immediately subject to religious or moral consideration, it is dangerous to be too long or too rigidly in the right. Sensibility may, by an incessant attention to elegance and propriety, be quickened to a tenderness inconsistent with the condition of humanity, irritable by the smallest asperity, and vulnerable by the gentlest touch. He that pleases himself too much with minute exactness, and submits to endure nothing in accommodations, attendance, or address, below the point of perfection, will, whenever he enters the crowd of life, be harassed with innumerable distresses, from which those who have not in the same manner increased their sensations find no disturbance. His exotick softness will shrink at the coarseness of vulgar felicity, like a plant transplanted to northern nurseries, from the dews and sunshine of the tropical regions.

There will always be a wide interval between practical and ideal excellence; and therefore, if we allow not ourselves to be satisfied while we can perceive any error or defect, we must refer our hopes of ease to some other period of existence. It is well known, that exposed to a microscope, the smoothest polish of the most solid bodies discovers cavities and prominences; and that the softest bloom of roseate viginity repels

the eye with excrescences and discolorations. The perceptions as well as the senses may be improved to our own disquiet, and we may, by diligent cultivation of the powers of dislike, raise in time an artificial fastidiousness, which shall fill the imagination with phantoms of turpitude, shew us the naked skeleton of every delight, and present us only with the pains of pleasure, and the deformities of beauty.

Peevishness, indeed, would perhaps very little disturb the peace of mankind, were it always the consequence of superfluous delicacy; for it is the privilege only of deep reflection, or lively fancy, to destroy happiness by art and refinement. But by continual indulgence of a particular humour, or by long enjoyment of undisputed superiority, the dull and thoughtless may likewise acquire the power of tormenting themselves and others, and become sufficiently ridiculous or hateful to those who are within sight of their conduct, or reach of their influence.

They that have grown old in a single state are generally found to be morose, fretful, and captious; tenacious of their own practices and maxims; soon offended by contradiction or negligence, and impatient of any association, but with those that will watch their nod, and submit themselves to unlimited authority. Such is the effect of having lived without the necessity of consulting any inclination but their own.

The irascibility of this class of tyrants is generally exerted upon petty provocations, such as are incident to understandings not far extended be-

yond the instincts of animal life; but unhappily he that fixes his attention on things always before him, will never have long cessations of anger. There are many veterans of luxury, upon whom every noon brings a paroxysm of violence, fury, and execration; they never sit down to their dinner without finding the meat so injudiciously bought, or so unskilfully dressed, such blunders in the seasoning, or such improprieties in the sauce, as can scarcely be expiated without blood; and, in the transports of resentment, make very little distinction between guilt and innocence, but let fly their menaces, or growl out their discontent, upon all whom fortune exposes to the storm.

It is not easy to imagine a more unhappy condition than that of dependence on a peevish man. In every other state of inferiority the certainty of pleasing is perpetually increased by a fuller knowledge of our duty; and kindness and confidence are strengthened by every new act of trust, and proof of fidelity. But peevishness sacrifices to a momentary offence, the obsequiousness or usefulness of half a life, and as more is performed, increases her exactions.

Chrysalus gained a fortune by trade, and retired into the country; and, having a brother burdened by the number of his children, adopted one of his sons. The boy was dismissed with many prudent admonitions; informed of his father's inability to maintain him in his native rank, cautioned against all opposition to the opinions or precepts of his uncle; and animated to perseverance by the hopes of supporting the honour of

the family, and overtopping his elder brother. He had a natural ductility of mind, without much warmth of affection, or elevation of sentiment; and therefore readily complied with every variety of caprice; patiently endured contradictory reproofs; heard false accusations without pain, and opprobrious reproaches without reply; laughed obstreperously at the ninetieth repetition of a joke; asked questions about the universal decay of trade; admired the strength of those heads by which the price of stocks is changed and adjusted; and behaved with such prudence and circumspection that after six years the will was made, and Juvenculus was declared heir. But unhappily, a month afterwards, retiring at night from his uncle's chamber, he left the door open behind him: the old man tore his will, and being then perceptibly declining, for want of time to deliberate, left his money to a trading company.

When female minds are imbittered by age or solitude, their malignity is generally exerted in a rigorous and spiteful superintendence of domestick trifles. Eriphile has employed her eloquence for twenty years upon the degeneracy of servants, the nastiness of her house, the ruin of her furniture, the difficulty of preserving tapestry from the moths, and the carelessness of the sluts whom she employs in brushing it. It is her business every morning to visit all the rooms, in hopes of finding a chair without its cover, a window shut or open contrary to her orders, a spot on the hearth, or a feather on the floor, that the rest of the day may be justifiably spent in taunts of contempt, and

vociferations of anger. She lives for no othe purpose but to preserve the neatness of a hous and gardens, and feels neither inclination to plea sure, nor aspiration after virtue, while she is en grossed by the great employment of keeping gra vel from grass, and wainscot from dust. Of thre amiable nieces she has declared herself an irrecon cileable enemy to one, because she broke off a tuli with her hoop; to another, because she spilt he coffee on a Turkey-carpet; and to the third, be cause she let a wet dog run into the parlour. Sh has broken of her intercourse of visits, becaus company makes a house dirty; and resolves t confine herself more to her own affairs, and to liv no longer in mire by foolish lenity.

Peevishness is generally the vice of narrow mind and, except when it is the effect of anguish an disease, by which the resolution is broken, an the mind made too feeble to bear the lightest ad dition to its miseries, proceeds from an unreasor able persuasion of the importance of trifles. Th proper remedy against it is, to consider the dignit of human nature, and the folly of suffering per turbation and uneasiness from causes unworthy c our notice.

He that resigns his peace to little casualties, an suffers the course of his life to be interrupted b fortuitous inadvertencies or offences, delivers u himself to the direction of the wind, and loses a that constancy and equanimity which constitut the chief praise of a wise man.

The province of prudence lies between th greatest things and the least; some surpass ou

power by their magnitude, and some escape our notice by their number and their frequency. But the indispensable business of life will afford sufficient exercise to every understanding; and such is the limitation of the human powers, that by attention to trifles we must let things of importance pass unobserved; when we examine a mite with a glass, we see nothing but a mite.

That it is every man's interest to be pleased, will need little proof: that it is his interest to please others, experience will inform him. It is therefore not less necessary to happiness than to virtue, that he rid his mind of passions which make him uneasy to himself, and hateful to the world, which enchain his intellect, and obstruct his improvement.

N° 113. TUESDAY, APRIL 16, 1

——*Uxorem, Posthume, ducis?*
Dic qua Tisiphone, quibus exagitare colubris

A sober man like thee to change his life!
What fury wou'd possess thee with a wife.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I KNOW not whether it is always a proof
nocence to treat censure with contempt
owe so much reverence to the wisdom c
kind, as justly to wish, that our own op
our merit may be ratified by the concurr
other suffrages; and since guilt and infam
have the same effect upon intelligences un
pierce beyond external appearance, and inf
often rather by example than precept, we
liged to refute a false charge, lest we shoul
tenance the crime which we have never com
To turn away from an accusation with si
ous silence, is equally in the power of hin
hardened by villany, and inspirited by inn
The wall of brass which Horace erects
clear conscience, may be sometimes raised
pudence or power; and we should alwa

to preserve the dignity of virtue by adorning her with graces, which wickedness cannot assume.

For this reason I have determined no longer to endure, with either patient or sullen resignation, a reproach, which is, at least in my opinion, unjust; but will lay my case honestly before you, that you or your readers may at length decide it.

'Whether you will be able to preserve your boasted impartiality, when you hear that I am considered as an adversary by half the female world, you may surely pardon me for doubting, notwithstanding the veneration to which you may imagine yourself entitled by your age, your learning, your abstraction, or your virtue. Beauty, Mr. Rambler, has often overpowered the resolutions of the firm, and the reasonings of the wise, roused the old to sensibility, and subdued the rigorous to softness.

I am one of those unhappy beings, who have been marked out as husbands for many different women, and deliberated a hundred times on the brink of matrimony. I have discussed all the nuptial preliminaries so often, that I can repeat the forms in which jointures are settled, pin-money secured, and provisions for younger children ascertained; but am at last doomed by general consent to everlasting solitude, and excluded by an irreversible decree from all hopes of connubial felicity. I am pointed out by every mother, as a man whose visits cannot be admitted without reproach; who raises hopes only to imbitter disappointment, and makes offers only to seduce girls into a waste of that part of life, in which they

might gain advantageous matches, and becc
mistresses and mothers.

I hope you will think that some part of t
penal severity may justly be remitted, when I
form you, that I never yet professed love to a
man without sincere intentions of marriage; t
I have never continued an appearence of intim
from the hour that my inclination changed, bu
preserve her whom I was leaving from the sh
of abruptness, or the ignominy of contempt: t
I always endeavoured to give the ladies an oppor
nity of seeming to discard me: and that I ne
forsook a mistress for larger fortune, or brigh
beauty, but because I discovered some irregular
in her conduct, or some depravity in her min
not because I was charmed by another, but
cause I was offended by herself.

I was very early tired of that succession
amusements by which the thoughts of most you
men are dissipated, and had not long glittered
the splendour of an ample patrimony before
wished for the calm of domestick happine
Youth is naturally delighted with sprightliness a
ardour, and therefore I breathed out the sighs
my first affection at the feet of the gay, the spa
ling, the vivacious Ferocula. I fancied to mys
a perpetual source of happiness in wit never e
hausted, and spirit never depressed; looked wi
veneration on her readiness of expedients, contem
of difficulty, assurance of address and promptitu
of reply; considered her as exempt by some p
rogative of nature from the weakness and timidi
of female minds; and congratulated myself up

a companion superior to all common troubles and embarrassments. I was, indeed, somewhat disturbed by the unshaken perseverance with which she enforced her demands of an unreasonable settlement; yet I should have consented to pass my life in union with her, had not my curiosity led me to a crowd gathered in the street, where I found Ferocula in the presence of hundreds, disputing for sixpence with a chairman. I saw her in so little need of assistance, that it was no breach of the laws of chivalry to forbear interposition, and I spared myself the shame of owning her acquaintance. I forgot some point of ceremony at our next interview, and soon provoked her to forbid me her presence.

My next attempt was upon a lady of great eminence for learning and philosophy. I had frequently observed the barrenness and uniformity of connubial conversation, and therefore thought highly of my own prudence and discernment, when I selected from a multitude of wealthy beauties, the deep-read Misothea, who declared herself the inexorable enemy of ignorant pertness, and puerile levity; and scarcely condescended to make tea, but for the linguist, the geometrician, the astronomer, or the poet. The queen of the Amazons was only to be gained by the hero who could conquer her in single combat; and Misothea's heart was only to bless the scholar who could overpower her by disputation. Amidst the fondest transports of courtship she could call for a definition of terms, and treated every argument with contempt that could not be reduced to regular syllogism. You

may easily imagine, that I wished this courtship at an end; but when I desired her to shorten my torments, and fix the day of my felicity, we were led into a long conversation, in which Misothea endeavoured to demonstrate the folly of attributing choice and self-direction to any human being. It was not difficult to discover the danger of committing myself for ever to the arms of one who might at any time mistake the dictates of passion, or the calls of appetite for the decree of fate; or consider cuckoldom as necessary to the general system, as a link in the everlasting chain of successive causes. I therefore told her, that destiny had ordained us to part, and that nothing should have torn me from her but the talons of necessity.

I then solicited the regard of the calm, the prudent, the œconomical Sophronia, a lady who considered wit as dangerous, and learning as superfluous, and thought that the woman who kept her house clean, and her accounts exact, took receipts for every payment, and could find them at a sudden call, inquired nicely after the condition of the tenants, read the price of stocks once a week, and purchased every thing at the best market, could want no accomplishments necessary to the happiness of a wise man. She discoursed with great solemnity on the care and viligance which the superintendence of a family demands; observed how many were ruined by confidence in servants; and told me that she never expected honesty but from a strong chest, and that the best storekeeper was the mistress's eye. Many such oracles of generosity she uttered, and made every day new im-

provements in her schemes for the regulation of her servants, and the distribution of her time. I was convinced, that whatever I might suffer from Sophronia, I should escape poverty; and we therefore proceeded to adjust the settlements according to her own rule, fair and softly. But one morning her maid came to me in tears to intreat my interest for a reconciliation to her mistress, who had turned her out at night for breaking six teeth in a tortoise-shell comb: she had attended her lady from a distant province, and having not lived long enough to save much money, was destitute among strangers, and thought of a good family, in danger of perishing in the streets, or of being compelled by hunger to prostitution. I made no scruple of promising to restore her; but upon my first application to Sophronia, was answered with an air which called for approbation, that if she neglected her own affairs, I might suspect her of neglecting mine; that the comb stood her in three half-crowns; that no servant should wrong her twice; and that indeed she took the first opportunity of parting with Phillida, because, though she was honest, her constitution was bad, and she thought her very likely to fall sick. Of our conference I need not tell you the effect; it surely may be forgiven me, if on this occasion I forgot the decency of common forms.

From two more ladies I was disengaged by finding, that they entertained my rivals at the same time, and determined their choice by the liberality of our settlements. Another I thought myself justified in forsaking, because she gave my attor-

ney a bribe to favour her in the bargain; another, because I could never soften her to tenderness, till she heard that most of my family had died young; and another, because, to increase her fortune by expectations, she represented her sister as languishing and consumptive.

I shall in another letter give the remaining part of my history of courtship. I presume that I should hitherto have injured the majesty of female virtue, had I not hoped to transfer my affection to higher merit.

I am, &c.

HYMENÆUS.

N° 114. SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 1751.

——*Audi,*
Nulla unquam de morte hominis cunctatio longa est.
JUV.

——When a man's life is in debate,
The judge can ne'er too long deliberate.
DRYDEN.

POWER and superiority are so flattering and delightful, that, fraught with temptation and exposed to danger as they are, scarcely any virtue is so cautious, or any prudence so timorous, as to decline them. Even those that have most reverence for the laws of right, are pleased with shewing that not fear, but choice, regulates their behaviour; and would be thought to comply, rather than obey. We love to overlook the boundaries which we do not wish to pass; and as the Roman satirist remarks, he that has no design to take the life of another, is yet glad to have it in his hands.

From the same principle, tending yet more to degeneracy and corruption, proceeds the desire of investing lawful authority with terror, and governing by force rather than persuasion. Pride is unwilling to believe the necessity of assigning any other reason than her own will; and would rather maintain the most equitable claims by violence and penalties, than descend from the dignitiy of command to *dispute and* expostulation.

It may, I think, be suspected, that this political arrogance has sometimes found its ways into legislative assemblies, and mingled with deliberations upon property and life. A slight perusal of the laws by which the measures of vindictive and coercive justice are established, will discover so many disproportions between crimes and punishments, such capricious distinctions of guilt, and such confusion of remissness and severity, as can scarcely be believed to have been produced by publick wisdom, sincerely and calmly studious of publick happiness.

The learned, the judicious, the pious Boerhaave relates, that he never saw a criminal dragged to execution without asking himself, "Who knows "whether this man is not less culpable than me?" On the days when the prisons of this city are emptied into the grave, let every spectator of the dreadful procession put the same question to his own heart. Few among those that crowd in thousands to the legal massacre, and look with carelessness, perhaps with triumph, on the utmost exacerbations of human misery, would then be able to return without horror and dejection. For who can congratulate himself upon a life passed without some act more mischievous to the peace or prosperity of others, than the theft of a piece of money?

It has been always the practice, when any particular species of robbery becomes prevalent and common, to endeavour its suppression by capital denunciations. Thus, one generation of malefactors is commonly cut off, and their successors are

frighted into new expedients; the art of thievery is augmented with greater variety of fraud, and subtilized to higher degrees of dexterity, and more occult methods of conveyance. The law then renews the pursuit in the heat of anger, and overtakes the offender again with death. By this practice, capital inflictions are multiplied, and crimes, very different in their degrees of enormity, are equally subjected to the severest punishment that man has the power of exercising upon man.

The lawgiver is undoubtedly allowed to estimate the malignity of an offence, not merely by the loss or pain which single acts may produce, but by the general alarm and anxiety arising from the fear of mischief and insecurity of possession: he therefore exercises the right which societies are supposed to have over the lives of those that compose them, not simply to punish a transgression, but to maintain order and preserve quiet; he enforces those laws with severity that are most in danger of violation, as the commander of a garrison doubles the guard on that side which is threatened with the enemy.

This method has been long tried, but tried with so little success, that rapine and violence are hourly increasing: yet few seem willing to despair of its efficacy, and of those who employ their speculations upon the present corruption of the people, some propose the introduction of more horrid, lingering, and terrifick punishments; some are inclined to accelerate the executions; some to discourage pardons; and all seem to think that lenity has given confidence to wickedness, and that we

can only be rescued from the talons of robbery by inflexible rigour and sanguinary justice.

Yet since the right of setting an uncertain and arbitrary value upon life has been disputed, and since experience of past time gives us little reason to hope that any reformation will be effected by a periodical havock of our fellow-beings, perhaps it will not be useless to consider what consequences might arise from relaxations of the law, and a more rational and equitable adaptation of penalties to offences.

Death is, as one of the ancients observes, τὸ τῶν φοβερῶν φοβερώτατον, *of dreadful things the most dreadful*; an evil beyond which nothing can be threatened by sublunary power, or feared from human enmity or vengeance. This terror should, therefore, be reserved as the last resort of authority, as the strongest and most operative of prohibitory sanctions, and placed before the treasure of life, to guard from invasion what cannot be restored. To equal robbery with murder is to reduce murder to robbery, to confound in common minds the gradations of iniquity, and incite the commission of a greater crime to prevent the detection of a less. If only murder were punished with death, very few robbers would stain their hands in blood; but when, by the last act of cruelty, no new danger is incurred, and great security may be obtained, upon what principle shall we bid them forbear?

It may be urged, that the sentence is often mitigated to simple robbery; but surely this is to confess that our laws are unreasonable in our own opinion; and indeed, it may be observed, that all

but murderers have, at their last hour, the common sensations of mankind pleading in their favour.

From this conviction of the inequality of the punishment to the offence, proceeds the frequent solicitation of pardons. They who would rejoice at the correction of a thief, are yet shocked at the thought of destroying him. His crime shrinks to nothing, compared with his misery, and severity defeats itself by exciting pity.

The gibbet, indeed, certainly disables those who die upon it from infecting the community; but their death seems not to contribute more to the reformation of their associates than any other method of separation. A thief seldom passes much of his time in recollection or anticipation, but from robbery hastens to riot, and from riot to robbery; nor, when the grave closes upon his companion, has any other care than to find another.

The frequency of capital punishments, therefore, rarely hinders the commission of a crime, but naturally and commonly prevents its detection, and is, if we proceed only upon prudential principles, chiefly for that reason to be avoided. Whatever may be urged by casuists or politicians, the greater part of mankind, as they can never think that to pick the pocket and to pierce the heart is equally criminal, will scarcelybelieve that two malefactors so different in guilt can be justly doomed to the same punishment; nor is the necessity of submitting the conscience to human laws so plainly evinced, so clearly stated, or so generally allowed, but that the pious, the tender, and the just, will always scruple to concur with the community in

an act which their private judgment cannot ap prove.

He who knows not how often rigorous law produce total impunity, and how many crimes ar concealed and forgotten for fear of hurrying th offender to that state in which there is no repen tance, has conversed very little with mankind And whatever epithets of reproach or contemp this compassion may incur from those who con found cruelty with firmness, I know not whethe any wise man would wish it less powerful, or les extensive.

If those whom the wisdom of our laws has con demned to die, had been detected in their rudi ments of robbery, they might, by proper disciplin and useful labour, have been disentangled from thei habits, they might have escaped all the temptatior to subsequent crimes, and passed their days in r paration and penitence; and detected they mig all have been, had the prosecutors been certain tl their lives would have been spared. I belie every thief will confess, that he has been m than once seized and dismissed; and that he sometimes ventured upon capital crimes, bec he knew, that those whom he injured w rather connive at his escape, than cloud their r with the horrors of his death.

All laws against wickedness are ineffectu less some will inform, and some will pros but till we mitigate the penalties for mere vio of property, information will always be hat prosecution dreaded. The heart of a go cannot but recoil at the thought of pun

slight injury with death; especially when he remembers, that the thief might have procured safety by another crime, from which he was restrained only by his remaining virtue.

The obligations to assist the exercise of publick justice are indeed strong; but they will certainly be overpowered by tenderness for life. What is punished with severity contrary to our ideas of adequate retribution, will be seldom discovered; and multitudes will be suffered to advance from crime to crime, till they deserve death, because, if they had been sooner prosecuted, they would have suffered death before they deserved it.

This scheme of invigorating the laws by relaxation, and extirpating wickedness by lenity, is so remote from common practice, that I might reasonable fear to expose it to the publick, could it be supported only by my own observations: I shall, therefore, by ascribing it to its author, Sir Thomas More, endeavour to procure it that attention, which I wish always paid to prudence, to justice, and to mercy.

N° 115. TUESDAY, APRIL 23. 17

Quædam parva quidem, sed non toleranda ma

JUV.

Some faults, though small, intolerable grow.

DRY

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I SIT down in pursuance of my late engage to recount the remaining part of the adve that befel me in my long quest of co felicity, which, though I have not yet be happy as to obtain it, I have at least endeav to deserve by unwearied diligence, without s ing from repeated disappointments any abate of my hope, or repression of my activity.

You must have observed in the world a s of mortals who employ themselves in prom matrimony, and, without any visible moti interest or vanity, without any discoverable im of malice or benevolence, without any reaso that they want objects of attention and topic conversation, are incessantly busy in procuring and husbands. They fill the ears of every man and woman with some convenient match when they are informed of your age and for offer a partner of life with the same readiness *the same indifference*, as a salesman, when h

taken measure by his eye, fits his customer with a coat.

It might be expected that they should soon be discouraged from this officious interposition by resentment or contempt; and that every man should determine the choice on which so much of his happiness must depend, by his own judgment and observation: yet it happens, that as these proposals are generally made with a show of kindness, they seldom provoke anger, but are at worst heard with patience, and forgotten. They influence weak minds to approbation; for many are sure to find in a new acquaintance, whatever qualities report has taught them to expect; and in more powerful and active understandings they excite curiosity; and sometimes, by a lucky chance, bring persons of similar tempers within the attraction of each other.

I was known to possess a fortune, and to want a wife; and therefore was frequently attended by these hymeneal solicitors, with whose importunity I was sometimes diverted, and sometimes perplexed: for they contended for me as vultures for a carcase; each employing all his eloquence, and all his artifices, to enforce and promote his own scheme, from the success of which he was to receive no other advantage than the pleasure of defeating others equally eager, and equally industrious.

An invitation to sup with one of those busy friends, made me by a concerted chance acquainted with Camilla, by whom it was expected, that I should be suddenly and irresistibly enslaved. The lady, whom *the same kindness* had brought without

her own concurrence into the lists of love, to think me at least worthy of the honour tivity; and exerted the power, both of h and wit, with so much art and spirit, that I had been too often deceived by appeara devote myself irrevocaby at the first intervi I could not suppress some raptures of adm and flutters of desire. I was easily persu make nearer approaches; but soon discover an union with Camilla was not much to be Camilla professed a boundless contempt folly, levity, ignorance, and impertinence own sex; and very frequently expressed h der that men of learning or experience co mit to trifle away life with beings incapable thought. In mixed companies, she always a ed with the men, and declared her sati when the ladies retired. If any short ex into the country was proposed, she comm sisted upon the exclusion of women from the because, where they were admitted, the ti wasted in frothy compliments, weak indul and idle ceremonies. To shew the greatnes mind, she avoided all compliance with the f and to boast the profundity of her kno mistook the various textures of silk, con tabbies with damasks, and sent for ribba wrong names. She despised the comm stated visits, a farce of empty form with struction; and congratulated herself, that sh learned to write message cards. She oft plauded the noble sentiment of Plato, who that he was born a man rather than a w *proclaimed her* approbation of Swift's opini

women are only a higher species of monkeys; and confessed, that when she considered the behaviour or heard the conversation of her sex, she could not but forgive the Turks for suspecting them to want souls.

It was the joy and pride of Camilla to have provoked, by this insolence, all the rage of hatred and all the persecutions of calumniy; nor was she ever more elevated with her own superiority, than when she talked of female anger, and female cunning. Well, says she, has nature provided that such virulence should be disabled by folly, and such cruelty be restrained by impotence?

Camilla doubtless expected, that what she lost on one side, she should gain on the other; and imagined that every male heart would be open to a lady, who made such generous advances to the borders of virility. But man, ungrateful man, instead of springing forward to meet her, shrunk back at her approach. She was persecuted by the ladies as a deserter, and at best received by the men only as a fugitive. I, for my part, amused myself a while with her fopperies, but novelty soon gave way to detestation, for nothing out of the common order of nature can be long borne. I had no inclination to a wife who had the ruggedness of a man without his force, and the ignorance of a woman without her softness; nor could I think my quiet and honour to be entrusted to such audacious virtue as was hourly courting danger, and soliciting assault.

My next mistress was Nitella, a lady of gentle mien and soft voice, always speaking to approve, and *ready to receive* direction from those with

whom chance had brought her into company. In Nitella I promised myself an easy friend, with whom I might loiter away the day without disturbance or alteration. I therefore soon resolved to address her, but was discouraged from prosecuting my courtship by observing, that her apartments were superstitiously regular; and that, unless she had notice of my visit, she was never to be seen. There is a kind of anxious cleanliness which I have always noted as the characteristick of a slattern; it is the superfluous scrupulosity of guilt, dreading discovery, and shunning suspicion: it is the violence of an effort against habit, which, being impelled by external motives, cannot stop at the middle point.

Nitella was always tricked out rather with nicety than elegance; and seldom could forbear to discover, by her uneasiness and constraint, that her attention was burdened, and her imagination engrossed: I therefore concluded, that, being only occasionally and ambitiously dressed, she was not familiarized to her own ornaments. There are so many competitors for the fame of cleanliness, that it is not hard to gain information of those that fail, from those that desire to excel: I quickly found, that Nitella passed her time between finery and dirt; and was always in a wrapper, nightcap, and slippers, when she was not decorated for immediate show.

I was then led by my evil destiny to Charybdis, who never neglected an opportunity of seizing a new prey when it came within her reach. I thought myself quickly made happy by permission to attend her to publick places; and pleased my own vanity *with imagining*, the envy which I should raise in a

thousand hearts, by appearing as the acknowledged favourite of Charybdis She soon after hinted her intention to take a ramble for a fortnight, into a part of the kingdom which she had never seen. I solicited the happiness of accompanying her, which, after a short reluctance, was indulged me. She had no other curiosity in her journey, than after all possible means of expence; and was every moment taking occasion to mention some delicacy, which I knew it my duty upon such notices to procure.

After our return, being now more familiar, she told me, whenever we met, of some new diversion; at night she had notice of a charming company that would breakfast in the gardens; and in the morning had been informed of some new song in the opera, some new dress at the play-house, or some performer at a concert whom she longed to hear. Her intelligence was such, that there never was a show, to which she did not summon me on the second day; and as she hated a crowd, and could not go alone, I was obliged to attend at some intermediate hour, and pay the price of a whole company. When we passed the streets, she was often charmed with some trinket in the toy-shops; and from moderate desires of seals and snuff boxes, rose, by degrees, to gold and diamonds. I now began to find the smile of Charybdis too costly for a private purse, and added one more to six and forty lovers, whose fortune and patience her rapacity had exhausted.

Imperia than took possession of my affections; but kept them only for a short time. She had newly *inherited a large* fortune, and having spent

the early part of her life in the perusal of romances brought with her into the gay world all the pride of Cleopatra; expected nothing less than vows altars, and sacrifices; and thought her charms dishonoured, and her power infringed, by the softest opposition to her sentiments, or the smallest transgression of her commands. Time might indeed cure this species of pride in a mind not naturally undiscerning, and vitiated only by false representations; but the operations of time are slow; and I therefore left her to grow wise at leisure, or to continue in error at her own expence.

Thus I have hitherto, in spite of myself, passed my life in frozen celibacy. My friends, indeed, often tell me, that I flatter my imagination with higher hopes than human nature can gratify; that I dress up an ideal charmer in all the radiance of perfection, and then enter the world to look for the same excellence in corporeal beauty. But surely, Mr. Rambler, it is not madness to hope for some terrestrial lady unstained with the spots which I have been describing; at least I am resolved to pursue my search; for I am so far from thinking meanly of marriage, that I believe it able to afford the highest happiness decreed to our present state; and if after all these miscarriages I find a woman that fills up my expectation, you shall hear once more from

Yours, &c.

HYMENÆUS.

N° 116. SATURDAY, APRIL, 27, 1751.

Optat ephippia bos; piger optat arare caballus.
HOR.

Thus the slow ox would gaudy trappings claim;
The sprightly horse would plough———
FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I WAS the second son of a country gentleman by the daughter of a wealthy citizen of London. My father having by his marriage freed the estate from a heavy mortgage, and paid his sisters their portions, thought himself discharged from all obligation to further thought, and entitled to spend the rest of his life in rural pleasures. He therefore spared nothing that might contribute to the completion of his felicity; he procured the best guns and horses that the kingdom could supply, paid large salaries to his groom and huntsman, and became the envy of the country for the discipline of his hounds. But above all his other attainments, he was eminent for a breed of pointers and setting dogs, which by long and vigilant cultivation he

had so much improved, that not a partrid heathcock could rest in security, and ga whatever species that dared to light up manor, was beaten down by his shot, or c with his nets.

My elder brother was very early initiated chace, and at an age when other boys are cr like snails unwilling to school, he could wi horn, beat the bushes, bound over hedges, an rivers. When the huntsman one day bro leg, he supplied his place with equal abiliti came home with the scut in his hat, amidst t clamations of the whole village. I being delicate or timorous, less desirous of hon less capable of sylvan heroism, was always vourite of my mother; because I kept m clean, and my complexion free from freckl did not come home like my brother mired a ned, nor carry corn in my hat to the hors bring dirty curs into the parlour.

My mother had not been taught to amu self with books, and being much inclined to the ignorance and barbarity of the country disdained to learn their sentiments or conver and had made no addition to the notions wh had brought from the precincts of Cornhill was, therefore, always recounting the glo the city; enumerating the succession of m celebrating the magnificence of the banq Guildhall; and relating the civilities paid the companies feasts by men of whom some a made aldermen, some have fined for sheri none are worth less than forty thousand

She frequently displayed her father's greatness; told of the large bills which he had paid at sight; of the sums for which his word would pass upon the Exchange; the heaps of gold which he used on Saturday night to toss about with a shovel; the extent of his warehouse, and the strength of his doors; and when she relaxed her imagination with lower subjects, described the furniture of their country house, or repeated the wit of the clerks and porters.

By these narratives I was fired with the splendour and dignity of London, and of trade. I therefore devoted myself to a shop, and warmed my imagination from year to year with inquiries about the privileges of a freeman, the power of the common council, the dignity of a wholesale dealer, and the grandeur of mayoralty, to which my mother assured me that many had arrived who began the world with less than myself.

I was very impatient to enter into a path which led to such honour and felicity; but was forced for a time to endure some repression of my eagerness, for it was my grandfather's maxim, that *a young man seldom makes much money who is out of his time before two-and-twenty.* They thought it necessary, therefore, to keep me at home till the proper age, without any other employment than that of learning merchants accounts, and the art of regulating books; but at length the tedious days elapsed, I was transplanted to town, and with great satisfaction to myself, bound to a haberdasher.

My master, who had no conception of any vir-

tue, merit, or dignity, but that of being rich, had all the good qualities which naturally arise from a close and unwearied attention to the main chance; his desire to gain wealth was so well tempered by the vanity of shewing it, that without any other principle of action, he lived in the esteem of the whole commerical world; and was always treated with respect by the only men whose good opinion he valued or solicited, those who were universally allowed to be richer than himself.

By his instructions I learned in a few weeks to handle a yard with great dexterity, to wind tape neatly upon the ends of my fingers, and to make up parcels with exact frugality of paper and packthread; and soon caught from my fellow apprentices the true grace of a counter bow, the careless air with which a small pair of scales is to be held between the fingers, and the vigour and sprightliness with which the box, after the ribband has been cut, is returned into its place. Having no desire of any higher employment, and therefore applying all my powers to the knowledge of my trade, I was quickly master of all that could be known, became a critick in small wares, contrived new variations of figures, and new mixtures of colours, and was sometimes consulted by the weavers, when they projected fashions for the ensuing spring.

With all these accomplishments, in the fourth year of my apprenticeship, I paid a visit to my friends in the country, where I expected to be received as a new ornament of the family, and consulted by the neighbouring gentlemen as a master *of pecuniary* knowledge, and by the ladies as an

oracle of the mode. But unhappily, at the first publick table to which I was invited, appeared a student of the Temple, and an officer of the Guards, who looked upon me with a smile of contempt, which destroyed at once all my hopes of distinction, so that I durst hardly raise my eyes for fear of encountering their superiority of mien. Nor was my courage revived by any opportunities of displaying my knowledge: for the templar entertained the company for part of the day with historical narratives, and political observations; and the colonel afterwards detailed the adventures of a birth-night, told the claims and expectations of the courtiers, and gave an account of assemblies, gardens, and diversions. I, indeed, essayed to fill up a pause in a parliamentry debate with a faint mention of trade, and Spaniards; and once attempted, with some warmth to correct a gross mistake about a silver breast-knot; but neither of my antagonists seemed to think a reply necessary; they resumed their discourse without emotion, and again engrossed the attention of the company; nor did one of the ladies appear desirous to know my opinion of her dress, or to hear how long the carnation shot with white, that was then new amongst them, had been antiquated in town.

As I knew that neither of these gentlemen had more money than myself, I could not discover what had depressed me in their presence; nor why they were considered by others as more worthy of attention and respect; and therefore resolved, when we met again, to rouse my spirit, and force myself into notice. I went very early to the next weekly meeting, and was entertaining a small circle very

succesfully with a minute representation of my lord Mayor's show, when the colonel entered careless and gay, sat down with a kind of unceremonious civility, and without appearing to intend any interruption, drew my audience away to the other part of the room, to which I had not the courage to follow them. Soon after came in the lawyer, not indeed with the same attraction of mien, but with greater powers of language; and by one or other the company was so happily amused that I was neither heard nor seen, nor was able to give any other proof of my existence than that I put round the glass, and was in my turn permitted to name the toast.

My mother indeed endeavoured to comfort me in my vexation, by telling me, that perhaps these showy talkers were hardly able to pay every one his own; that he who has money in his pocket need not care what any man says of him; that, if I minded my trade, the time will come when lawyers and soldiers would be glad to borrow out of my purse; and that it is fine, when a man can set his hands to his sides, and say he is worth forty thousand pounds every day of the year. These and many more such consolations and encouragements, I received from my good mother, which, however, did not much allay my uneasiness; for having by some accident heard, that the country ladies despised her as a cit, I had therefore no longer much reverence for her opinions, but considered her as one whose ignorance and prejudice had hurried me, though without ill intentions, into a state of meanness and ignominy, from which I

could not find any possibility of raising to the rank which my ancestors had always held.

I returned, however, to my master, and busied myself among thread, and silks, and laces, but without my former cheerfulness and alacrity. I had now no longer any felicity in contemplating the exact disposition of my powdered curls, the equal plaits of my ruffles, or the glossy blackness of my shoes; nor heard with my former elevation those compliments which ladies sometimes condescended to pay me on my readiness in twisting a paper, or counting out the change. The term of *young man*, with which I was sometimes honoured, as I carried a parcel to the door of a coach, tortured my imagination; I grew negligent in my person, and sullen in my temper, often mistook the demands of the customers, treated their caprices and objections with contempt, and received and dismissed them with surly silence.

My master was afraid lest the shop should suffer by this change of my behaviour; and therefore, after some expostulations posted me in the warehouse, and preserved me from the danger and reproach of desertion, to which my discontent would certainly have urged me, had I continued any longer behind the counter.

In the sixth year of my servitude my brother died of drunken, joy, for having run down a fox that had baffled all the packs in the province. I was now heir, and with the hearty consent of my master commenced gentleman. The adventnres in which my new character engaged me shall be communicated in another letter, by, Sir,

Yours, &c. MISOCAPELUS.

N° 117. TUESDAY, APRIL 30,

Οσσαν επ' Ολυμπῳ μεμασαν θεμεν· αυταρ επ' Οσσῃ
Πηλιον ευσσιφυλλον, ιν' ουρανος αμβατος ειη.

H

The gods they challenge and affect the ski
Heav'd on Olmypus tott'ring Ossa stood;
On Ossa, Pelion nods with all his wood.

PO

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

NOTHING has more retarded the adva
of learning than the disposition of vulg
to ridicule and vilify what they cannot com
All industry must be excited by hope; and a
dent often proposes no other reward
self than praise, he is easily discouraged
tempt and insult. He who brings w
into a clamorous multitude the timidit
cluse speculation, and has never harde
front in publick life, or accustomed his pa
the vicissitudes and accidents, the triumj
defeats of mixed conversation, will blush at t
of petulant incredulity, and suffer himse
driven by a burst of laughter from the fo
demonstration. The mechanist will be a
assert before hardy contradiction, the possi
tearing down bulwarks with a silk worm's
and the astronomer of relating the rapidity o

the distance of the fixed stars, and the height of the lunar mountains.

If I could by any efforts have shaken off this cowardice, I had not sheltered myself under a borrowed name, nor applied to you for the means of communicating to the publick the theory of a garret; a subject which, except some slight and transient strictures, has been hitherto neglected by those who were best qualified to adorn it, either for want of leisure to prosecute the various researches in which a nice discussion must engage them, or because it requires such diversity of knowledge, and such extent of curiosity, as is scarcely to be found in any single intellect: or perhaps others foresaw the tumults which would be raised against them, and confined their knowledge to their own breasts, and abandoned prejudice and folly to the direction of chance.

That the professors of literature generally reside in the highest storeys, has been immemorially observed. The wisdom of the ancients was well acquainted with the intellectual advantages of an elevated situation: why else were the Muses stationed on Olympus or Parnassus by those who could with equal right have raised them bowers in the vale of Tempe, or erected their altars among the flexures of Meander? Why was Jove himself nursed upon a mountain? or why did the goddesses, when the prize of beauty was contested, try the cause upon the top of Ida? Such were the fictions by which the great masters of the earlier ages endeavoured to inculcate to posterity the importance of a garret, which, though they had been long obscured by the ignorance of succeeding times,

well enforced by the celebrated symbol of goras, ανεμων πνεοντων την ηχω προσκυνει "when e wind blows, worship its echo." This l not but be understood by his disciples as an lable injunction to live in a garret, which I : found frequently visited by the echo and the d. Nor was the tradition wholly obliterated in : age of Augustus, for Tibullus evidently con- atulates himself upon his garret, not without me allusion to the Pythagorean precept—

Quam juvat immites ventos audire cubantem—
Aut, gelidas hybernus aquas cum fuderit auster,
Securam somnos, imbre juvante, sequi!

How sweet in sleep to pass the careless hours,
Lull'd by the beating winds and dashing show'rs!

And it is impossible not to discover the fondness of Lucretius, an earlier writer, for a garret, in his description of the lofty towers of serene learning, and of the pleasure with which a wise man looks down upon the confused and erratick state of the world moving below him.

Sed nil dulcius est, bene quam munita tenere
Edita doctrina sapientum templa serena;
Despicere unde queas alios, passimque videre
Errare, atque viam palanteis quærere vitæ.

—'Tis sweet thy lab'ring steps to guide
To virtue's heights, with wisdom well supply'd,
And all the magazines of learning fortify'd:
From thence to look below on human kind,
Bewildered in the maze of life, and blind.

DRY

The institution has, indeed, continued own time; the garret is still the usual rec of the philosopher and poet; but this, lik

ancient customs, is perpetuated only by an accidental imitation, without knowledge of the orignal reason for which it was established.

Causa latet; res est notissima.

The cause is secret, but the effect is known.

ADDISON.

Conjectures, have, indeed, been advanced concerning these habitations of literature, but without much satisfaction to the judicious enquirer. Some have imagined, that the garret is generally chosen by the wits, as most easily rented; and concluded, that no man rejoices in his aerial abode, but on the days of payment. Others suspect, that a garret is chiefly convenient, as it is remoter than any other part of the house from the outer door, which is often observed to be infested by visitants, who talk incessantly of beer, or linen, or a coat, and repeat the same sounds every morning, and sometimes again in the afternoon, without any variation, except that they grow daily more importunate and clamorous, and raise their voices in time from mournful murmurs to raging vociferation. This eternal monotony is always detestable to a man whose chief pleasure is to enlarge his knowledge and vary his ideas. Others talk of freedom from noise, and abstraction from common business or amusements; and some yet more visionary, tell us that the faculties are enlarged by open prospects, and that the fancy is more at liberty when the eye ranges without confinement.

These conveniences may perhaps all be found in a *well-chosen* garret; but surely they cannot

be supposed sufficiently important to have operated unvariably upon different climates, distant ages, and separate nations. Of an universal practice, there must still be presumed an universal cause, which, however recondite and abstruse, may be perhaps reserved to make me illustrious by its discovery, and you by its promulgation.

It is universally known that the faculties of the mind are invigorated or weakened by the state of the body, and that the body is in a great measure regulated by the various compressions of the ambient element. The effects of the air in the production or cure of corporeal maladies have been acknowledged from the time of Hippocrates; but no man has yet sufficiently considered how far it may influence the operations of the genius, though every day affords instances of local understanding, of wits and reasoners, whose faculties are adapted to some single spot, and who, when they are removed to any other place, sink at once into silence and stupidity. I have discovered, by a long series of observations, that invention and elocution suffered great impediments from dense and impure vapours, and that the tenuity of a defecated air at a proper distance from the surface of the earth, accelerates the fancy, and sets at liberty those intellectual powers which were before shackled by too strong attraction, and unable to expand themselves under the pressure of a gross atmosphere. I have found dulness to quicken into sentiment in a thin ether, as water, though not very hot, boils in a receiver partly exhausted; and heads, in appearance empty, have teemed with notions upon rising ground, as

the flaccid sides of a football would have swelled out into stiffness and extension.

For this reason I never think myself qualified to judge decisively of any man's faculties, whom I have only known in one degree of elevation; but take some opportunity of attending him from the cellar to the garret, and try upon him all the various degrees of rarefaction and condensation, tension and laxity. If he is neither vivacious aloft, nor serious below, I then consider him as hopeless; but as it seldom happens, that I do not find the temper to which the texture of his brain is fitted, I accommodate him in time with a tube of mercury, first marking the point most favourable to his intellects, according to rules which I have long studied, and which I may, perhaps, reveal to mankind in a complete treatise of barometrical pneumatology.

Another cause of the gaiety and sprightliness of the dwellers in garrets is probably the increase of that vertiginous motion, with which we are carried round by the diurnal revolution of the earth. The power of agitation upon the spirits is well known; every man has felt his heart lightened in a rapid vehicle, or on a galloping horse; and nothing is plainer, than that he who towers to the fifth story, is whirled through more space by every circumrotation, than another that grovels upon the ground-floor. The nations between the tropicks are known to be fiery, inconstant, inventive, and fanciful; because, living at the utmost length of the earth's diameter, they are carried about with more swiftness than those whom nature has placed *nearer to the poles;* and therefore, as it becomes

a wise man to struggle with the inconveniencies of his country, whenever celerity and acuteness are requisite, we must actuate our languor by taking a few turns round the centre in a garret.

If you imagine that I ascribe to air and motion effects which they cannot produce, I desire you to consult your own memory, and consider whether you have never known a man acquire reputation in his garret, which, when fortune or a patron had placed him upon the first floor, he was unable to maintain; and who never recovered his former vigour of understanding till he was restored to his original situation. That a garret will make every man a wit, I am very far from supposing; I know there are some who would continue blockheads even on the summit of the Andes, or on the peak of Teneriffe. But let not any man be considered as unimproveable till this potent remedy has been tried; for perhaps he was formed to be great only in a garret, as the joiner of Aræus was rational in no other place but his own shop.

I think a frequent removal to various distances from the centre, so necessary to a just estimate of intellectual abilities, and consequently of so great use in education, that if I hoped that the publick could be persuaded to so expensive an experiment, I would propose, that there should be a cavern dug, and a tower erected, like those which Bacon describes in Solomon's house, for the expansion and concentration of understanding, according to the exigence of different employments, or constitutions. Perhaps some that fume away in meditations upon time and space in the tower, might *compose tables* of interest at a certain depth: and

he that upon level ground stagnates in silence, or creeps in narrative, might at the height of half a mile, ferment into merriment, sparkle with repartee, and froth with declamation.

Addison observes, that we may find the heat of Virgil's climate in some lines of his Georgics: so, when I read a composition, I immediately determine the height of the author's habitation. As an elaborate performance is commonly said to smell of the lamp, my commendation of a noble thought, a sprightly sally, or a bold figure, is to pronounce it fresh from the garret; an expression which would break from me upon the perusal of most of your papers, did I not believe, that you sometimes quit the garret, and ascend into the cock-loft.

HYPERTATUS.

N° 118. SATURDAY, MAY 4, 1751.

—Omnes illacrymabiles
Urgentur, ignotique longa
Nocte.

In endless night they sleep, unwept, unknown.
FRANCIS.

CICERO has, with his usual elegance and magnificence of language, attempted, in his relation of the dream of Scipio, to deprecate those *honours for which* he himself appears to have

panted with restless solicitude, by shewing within what narrow limits all that fame and celebrity which man can hope for from man is circumscribed.

"You see," says Africanus, pointing at the earth from the celestial regions, "that the globe "assigned to the residence and habitation of hu- "man beings is of small dimensions: how then "can you obtain from the praise of men, any glory "worthy of a wish? Of this little world the in- "habited parts are neither numerous nor wide; "even the spots where men are to be found are "broken by intervening desarts; and the nations "are so separated as that nothing can be trans- "mitted from one to another. With the people "of the south, by whom the opposite part of the "earth is possessed, you have no intercourse; and "by how small a tract do you communicate with "the countries of the north? The territory which "you inhabit is no more than a scanty island in- "closed by a small body of water, to which you "give the name of the great sea and the Altan- "tick ocean. And even in this known and fre- "quented continent, what hope can you entertain, "that your renown will pass the stream of Gan- "ges or the cliffs of Caucasus? or by whom "will your name be uttered in the extremities of "north or south, towards the rising or the "setting sun? So narrow is the space to which "your fame can be propagated, and even there "how long will it remain?"

He then proceeds to assign natural causes why fame is not only narrow in its extent, but short in its duration; he observes the difference between *the computation* of time in earth and heaven, and

declares that according to the celestial chronology, no human honours can last a single year.

Such are the objections by which Tully has made a shew of discouraging the pursuit of fame; objections which sufficiently discover his tenderness and regard for his darling phantom Homer, when the plan of his poem made the death of Patroclus necessary, resolved, at least that he should die with honour; and therefore brought down against him the patron god of Troy, and left to Hector only the mean task of giving the last blow to an enemy whom a divine hand had disabled from resistance. Thus Tully ennobles fame, which he professes to degrade, by opposing it to celestial happiness; he confines not its extent but by the boundaries of nature, nor contracts its duration but by representing it small in the estimation of superior beings. He still admits it the highest and noblest of terrestrial objects, and alledges little more against it, than that it is neither without end, nor without limits.

What might be the effect of these observations conveyed in Ciceronian eloquence to Roman understandings, cannot be determined; but few of those who shall in the present age read my humble version will find themselves much depressed in their hopes, or retarded in their designs; for I am not inclined to believe, that they who among us pass their lives in the cultivation of knowledge, or acquisition of power, have very anxiously inquired what opinions prevail on the further banks of the Ganges, or invigorated any effort by the desire of spreading their renown among the clans of Caucasus. The hopes and fears of modern minds are

content to range in a narrower compass; a single nation, and a few years, have generally sufficient amplitude to fill our imaginations.

A little consideration will indeed teach us, that fame has other limits than mountains and oceans; and that he who places happiness in the frequent repetition of his name, may spend his life in propagating it without any danger of weeping for new worlds, or necessity of passing the Atlantick sea.

The numbers to whom any real and perceptible good or evil can be derived by the greatest power, or most active diligence, are inconsiderable; and where neither benefit nor mischief operate, the only motive to the mention or remembrance of others is curiosity; a passion, which, though in some degree universally associated to reason, is easily confined, overborne, or diverted from any particular object.

Among the lower classes of mankind, there will be found very little desire of any other knowledge, than what may contribute immediately to the relief of some pressing uneasiness, or the attainment of some near advantage. The Turks are said to hear with wonder a proposal to walk out only that they may walk back; and inquire why any man should labour for nothing: so those whose condition has always restrained them to the contemplation of their own necessities, and who have been accustomed to look forward only to a small distance, will scarcely understand, why nights and days should be spent in studies, which end in new studies, and which, according to Malherbe's observation, do not tend to lessen the price of bread; nor will the trader or

manufacturer easily be persuaded, that much pleasure can arise from the mere knowledge of actions, performed in remote regions, or in distant times; or that any thing can deserve their inquiry, of which κλεος οιον ἀκουομεν, ὀδε, τι ἰδμεν we can only hear the report, but which cannot influence our lives by any consequences.

The truth is, that very few have leisure from indispensable business, to employ their thoughts upon narrative or characters; and among those to whom fortune has given the liberty of living more by their own choice, many create to themselves engagements, by the indulgence of some petty ambition, the admission of some insatiable desire, or the toleration of some predominant passion. The man whose whole wish is to accumulate money, has no other care than to collect interest, to estimate securities, and to engage for mortgages: the lover disdains to turn his ear to any other name than that of Corinna; and the courtier thinks the hour lost, which is not spent in promoting his interest, and facilitating his advancement. The adventures of valour and the discoveries of science, will find a cold reception, when they are obtruded upon an attention thus busy with its favourite amusement, and impatient of interruption or disturbance.

But not only such employments as seduce attention by appearances of dignity, or promises of happiness, may restrain the mind from excursion and inquiry; curiosity may be equally destroyed by less formidable enemies; it may be dissipated in trifles, or congealed by indolence. The sportsman and the man of dress have their heads filled with a *fox or a horse-race*, a feather or a ball; and

live in ignorance of every thing beside with as much content as he that heaps up gold, or solicits preferment, digs the field, or beats the anvil; and some yet lower in the ranks of intellect, dream out their days without pleasure or business, without joy or sorrow, nor ever rouse from their lethargy to hear or think.

Even of those who have dedicated themselves to knowledge, the far greater part have confined their curiosity to a few objects, and have very little inclination to promote any fame, but that which their own studies entitle them to partake. The naturalist has no desire to know the opinions or conjectures of the philologer: the botanist looks upon the astronomer as being unworthy of his regard: the lawyer scarcely hears the name of a physician without contempt; and he that is growing great and happy by electrifying a bottle, wonders how the world can be engaged by trifling prattle about war or peace.

If, therefore, he that imagines the world filled with his actions and praises, shall subduct from the number of his encomiasts all those who are placed below the flight of fame, and who hear in the valleys of life no voice but that of necessity; all those who imagine themselves too important to regard him, and consider the mention of his name as an usurpation of their time; all who are too much or to little pleased with themselves, to attend to any thing external; all who are attracted by pleasure, or chained down by pain, to unvaried ideas; all who are withheld from attending his triumph by different pursuits; and all who slumber in universal negligence; he will find his renown straiten-

ed by nearer bounds than the rocks of Caucasus, and perceive that no man can be venerable or formidable, but to a small part of his fellow creatures.

That we may not languish in our endeavours after excellence, it is necessary, that, as Africanus counsels his descendant, "we raise our eyes to "higher prospects, and contemplate our future "and eternal state, without giving up our hearts "to the praise of crowds, or fixing our hopes on "such rewards as human power can bestow."

N° 119. TUESDAY, MAY 7, 1751.

Iliacos intra muros peccatur, et extra.

HOR.

Faults lay on either side the Trojan tow'rs.

ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As, notwithstanding all that wit, or malice, or pride, or prudence, will be able to suggest, men and women must at last pass their lives together, I have never therefore thought those writers friends to human happiness, who endeavour to excite in either sex a general contempt or suspicion of the other. To persaude them who are entering the world, and looking abroad for a suitable associate, *that all* are equally vicious, or equally *ridiculous; that* they who trust are certainly be-

trayed, and they who esteem are always disappointed; is not to awaken judgement, but to inflame temerity. Without hope there can be no caution. Those who are convinced, that no reason for preference can be found, will never harass their thoughts with doubt and deliberation; they will resolve, since they are doomed to misery, that no needless anxiety shall disturb their quiet; they will plunge at hazard into the crowd, and snatch the first hand that shall be held toward them.

That the world is overrun with vice, cannot be denied; but vice, however predominant, has not yet gained an unlimited dominion. Simple and unmingled good is not in our power, but we may generally escape a greater evil by suffering a less; and therefore, those who undertake to initiate the young and ignorant in the knowledge of life, should be careful to inculcate the possibility of virtue and happiness, and to encourage endeavours by prospects of success.

You, perhaps, do not suspect, that these are the sentiments of one who has been subject for many years to all the hardships of antiquated virginity; has been long accustomed to the coldness of neglect, and the petulance of insult; has been mortified in full assemblies by inquiries after forgotten fashions, games long disused, and wits and beauties of ancient renown; has been invited, with malicious importunity, to the second wedding of many acquaintances; has been ridiculed by too generations of coquets in whispers intended to be heard; and been long considered by the airy and gay, as too venerable for familiarity, and too wise for *pleasure.* It is indeed natural for injury to pro-

voke anger, and by continual repetition to produce an habitual asperity; yet I have hitherto struggled with so much vigilance against my pride, and my resentment, that I have preserved my temper uncorrupted. I have not yet made it any part of my employment to collect sentences against marriage; nor am inclined to lessen the number of the few friends whom time has left me, by obstructing that happiness which I cannot partake, and venting my vexation in censures of the forwardness and indiscretion of girls, or the inconstancy, tastlessness, and perfidy of men.

It is, indeed, not very difficult to bear that condition to which we are not condemned by necessity, but induced by observation and choice; and therefore I, perhaps, have never yet felt all the malignity with which a reproach, edged with the appellation of old maid, swells some of those hearts in which it is infixed. I was not condemned in my youth to solitude, either by indigence or deformity, nor passed the earlier part of life without the flattery of courtship and the joys of triumph. I have danced the round of gaiety amidst the murmurs of envy, and gratulations of applause; been attended from pleasure to pleasure by the great, the sprightly, and the vain: and seen my regard solicited by the obsequiousness of gallantry, the gaiety of wit, and the timidity of love. If, therefore, I am yet a stranger to nuptial happiness, I suffer only the consequences of my own resolves, and can look back upon the succession of lovers, whose addresses I have rejected, without grief and without *malice*.

When my name first began to be increased upon

glasses, I was honoured with the amorous professions of the gay Venustulus, a gentleman, who, being the only son of a wealthy family, had been educated in all the wantonness of expence, and softness of effeminacy. He was beautiful in his person, and easy in his address, and therefore soon gained upon my eye, at an age when the sight is very little over-ruled by the understanding. He had not any power in himself of gladdening or amusing; but supplied his want of conversation by treats and diversions; and his chief art of courtship was to fill the mind of his mistress with parties, rambles, musick, and shows. We were often engaged in short excursions to gardens and seats, and I was for a while pleased with the care which Venustulus discovered in securing me from any appearance of danger, or possibility of mischance. He never failed to recommend caution to his coachman, or to promise the waterman a reward if he landed us safe; and always contrived to return by day-light for fear of robbers. This extraordinary solicitude was represented for a time as the effect of his tenderness for me; but fear is too strong for continued hypocrisy. I soon discovered, that Venustulus had the cowardice as well as elegance of a female. His imagination was perpetually clouded with terrors, and he could scracely refrain from screams and out-cries at any accidental surprise. He durst not enter a room if a rat was heard behind the wainscot, nor cross a field where the cattle were frisking in the sunshine; the least breeze that waved upon the river was a storm, and every clamour in the street *was a cry of* fire. I have seen him lose his colour

when my squirrel had broke his chain; and was forced to throw water in his face on the sudden entrance of a black cat. Compassion once obliged me to drive away with my fan, a beetle that kept him in distress, and chide off a dog that yelped at his heels, to which he would gladly have given up me to facilitate his own escape. Women naturally expect defence and protection from a lover or a husband, and therefore you will not think me culpable in refusing a wretch, who would have burdened life with unnecessary fears, and flown to me for that succour which it was his duty to have given.

My next lover was Fungosa, the son of a stock-jobber, whose visits my friends, by the importunity of persuasion, prevailed upon me to allow. Fungosa was no very suitable companion; for having been bred in a counting-house, he spoke a language unintelligible in any other place. He had no desire of any reputation, but that of an acute prognosticator of the changes in the funds; nor had any means of raising merriment, but by telling how somebody was overreached in a bargain by his father. He was, however, a youth of great sobriety and prudence, and frequently informed us how carefully he would improve my fortune. I was not in haste to conclude the match, but was so much awed by my parents, that I durst not dismiss him, and might perhaps have been doomed for ever to the grossness of pedlary, and the jargon of usury, had not a fraud been discovered in the settlement, which set me free from the persecution of groveling pride, and pecuniary imprudence.

I was afterwards six months without any parti-

cular notice, but at last became the idol of tering Flosculus, who prescribed the mode o broidery to all the fops of his time, and var pleasure the cock of every hat, and the slee every coat that appeared in fashionable assem Flosculus made some impression upon my he a compliment which few ladies can hear wi emotion; he commended my skill in dress judgment in suiting colours, and my art in di ing ornaments. But Flosculus was too muc gaged by his own elegance, to be sufficient tentive to the duties of a lover, or to please varied praise an ear made delicate by riot of a tion. He expected to be repaid part of hi bute, and staid away three days, because I ne ed to take notice of a new coat. I qu found, that Flosculus was rather a rival tha admirer; and that we should probably live perpetual struggle of emulous finery, and spen lives in stratagems to be first in the fashion.

I had soon after the honour at a feast of at ing they eyes of Dentatus, one of those huma ings whose only happiness is to dine. Den regaled me with foreign varieties, told me of sures that he had laid for procuring the best in France, and entertained me with bills of prescribed the arrangement of dishes, and ta me two sauces invented by himself. At le such is the uncertainty of human happiness, clared my opinion too hastily upon a pie under his own direction; after which he gre cold and negligent, that he was easily dismis

Many other lovers, or pretended lovers, I had the honour to lead a while in triumph.

of them I drove from me, by discovering that had no taste or knowledge in music; three missed because they were drunkards; two, use they paid their addresses at the same time her ladies; and six, because they attempted fluence my choice, by bribing my maid. Two I discarded at the second visit, for obscene ions; and five for drollery on religion. In atter part of my reign, I sentenced two to etual exile, for offering me settlements, by h the children of a former marriage would been injured; four, for representing falsely alue of their estates; three, for concealing debts; and one, for raising the rent of a de- t tenant.

have now sent you a narrative, which the s may oppose to the tale of Hymenæus. I not to depreciate the sex which has produced s and philosophers, heroes and martyrs; but not suffer the rising generation of beauties to ejected by partial satire: or to imagine, that who censured them have not likewise their s, and their vices. I do not yet believe happi- unattainable in marraige, though I have never een able to find a man, with whom I could ently venture an inseparable union. It is ssary to expose faults, that their deformity be seen; but the reproach ought not to be nded beyond the crime, nor either sex to be lemned, because some women, or men, are in- ate, or dishonest.

I am, &c.

TRANQUILLA.

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

N° 120. SATURDAY, MAY 11, 1751.

Redditum Cyri solio Phraaten
Dissidens plebi, numero beatorum
Eximit virtus, populumque falsis
Dedocet uti
Vocibus.

HOR.

True virtue can the crowd unteach
Their false mistaken forms of speech;
Virtue, to crowds a foe profest,
Disdains to number with the blest
Phraates, by his slaves ador'd,
And to the Parthian crown restor'd.

FRANCIS.

In the reign of Genghiz Can, conqueror of the east, in the city of Samarcand, lived Nouradin the merchant, renowned throughout all the regions of India for the extent of his commerce and the integrity of his dealings. His warehouses were filled with all the commodities of the remotest nations; every rarity of nature, every curiosity of art, whatever was valuable, whatever was useful, hasted to his hand. The streets were crowded with his carriages; the sea was covered with his ships; the streams of Oxus were wearied with conveyance, and every breeze of the sky wafted wealth to Nouradin.

At length Nouradin felt himself seized with a *slow* malady, which he first endeavoured to divert *by application*, and afterwards to relieve by luxury

and indulgence; but finding his strength every day less, he was at last terrified, and called for help upon the sages of physick; they filled his apartments with alexipharmics, restoratives, and essential virtues; the pearls of the ocean were dissolved, the spices of Arabia were distilled, and all the powers of nature were employed to give new spirits to his nerves, and new balsam to his blood. Nouradin was for some time amused with promises, invigorated with cordials, or soothed with anodynes; but the disease preyed upon his vitals, and he soon discovered with indignation, that health was not to be bought. He was confined to his chamber, deserted by his physicians, and rarely visited by his friends; but his unwillingness to die flattered him long with hopes of life.

At length, having passed the night in tedious languur, he called to him Almamoulin, his only son; and dismissed his attendants, "My son," says he, "behold here the weakness and fragility "of man; look backward a few days, thy father "was great and happy, fresh as the vernal rose, "and strong as the cedar of the mountain; the "nations of Asia drank his dews, and art and "ommerce delighted in his shade. Malevolence "beheld me, and sighed: His root, she cried, is "fixed in the depths; it is watered by the foun-"tains of Oxus; it sends out branches afar, and "bids defiance to the blast; prudence reclines "against his trunk, and prosperity dances on his "top. Now, Almamoulin, look upon me "withering and prostrate; look upon me and at-"tend. I have trafficked, I have prospered, I "have rioted *in gain*: my house is splendid, my

"servants are numerous; yet I displayed only a "small part of my riches; the rest, which I was "hindered from enjoying by the fear of raising "envy, or tempting rapacity, I have piled in "towers, I have buried in caverns, I have hidden "in secret repositories which this scroll will dis-"cover. My purpose was, after ten months "more spent in commerce, to have withdrawn my "wealth to a safer country; to have given seven "years to delight and festivity, and the remaining "part of my days to solitude and repentance; "but the hand of death is upon me; a frigorifick "torpor encroaches upon my veins; I am now "leaving the produce of my toil, which it must "be thy business to enjoy with wisdom." The thought of leaving his wealth filled Nouradin with such grief that he fell into convulsions, became delirious, and expired.

Almamoulin, who loved his father, was touched a while with honest sorrow, and sat two hours in profound meditation, without perusing the paper which he held in his hand. He then retired to his own chamber, as overborne with affliction, and there read the inventory of his new possessions, which swelled his heart with such transports, that he no longer lamented his father's death. He was now sufficiently composed to order a funeral of modest magnificence, suitable at once to the rank of Nouradin's profession, and the reputation of his wealth. The two next nights he spent in visiting the tower and the caverns, and found the treasures greater to his eye than to his imagination.

Almamoulin had been bred to the practice of *exact frugality*, and had often looked with envy

on the finery and expences of other young men: he therefore believed, that happiness was now in his power, since he could obtain all of which he had hitherto been accustomed to regret the want. He resolved to give a loose to his desires, to revel in enjoyment, and feel pain or uneasiness no more.

He immediately procured a splendid equipage, dressed his servants in rich embroidery, and covered his horses with golden caparisons. He showered down silver on the populace, and suffered their acclamations to swell him with insolence. The nobles saw him with anger, the wise men of the state combined against him, the leaders of armies threatened his destruction. Almamoulin was informed of his danger; he put on the robe of mourning in the presence of his enemies, and appeased them with gold, and gems, and supplication.

He then sought to strengthen himself, by an alliance with the princes of Tartary, and offered the price of kingdoms for a wife of noble birth. His suit was generally rejected, and his presents refused; but a princess of Astracan once condescended to admit him to her presence. She received him sitting on a throne, attired in the robe of royalty, and shining with the jewels of Golconda; command sparkled in her eyes, and dignity towered on her forehead. Almamoulin approached and trembled. She saw his confusion, and disdained him: How, says she, dares the wretch hope my obedience, who thus shrinks at my glance? Retire and enjoy thy riches in sordid ostentation; thou wast born to be wealthy, but never canst be great.

He then contracted his desires to more private and *domestick pleasures*. He built palaces, he laid

out gardens, he changed the face of the la transplanted forests, he levelled mountains, prospects into distant regions, poured fo from the tops of turrets, and rolled rivers th new channels.

These amusements pleased him for a tim languor and weariness soon invaded him. bowers lost their fragrance, and the waters m ed without notice. He purchased large tr land in distant provinces, adorned them with of pleasure, and diversified them with accom tions for different seasons. Change of pl first relieved his satiety, but all the nove situation were soon exhausted; he found hi vacant, and his desires, for want of external o ravaging himself.

He therefore turned to Samarcand, a open his doors to those whom idleness sends search of pleasure. His tables were always c with delicacies; wines of every vintage sp in his bowls, and his lamps scattered per The sound of the lute, and the voice of the chased away sadness, every hour was crowde pleasure; and the day ended and began with and dances, and revelry and merriment. moulin cried out, "I have at last found the "riches; I am surrounded by companion "view my greatness without envy; and I e "once the raptures of popularity, and the "of an obscure station. What trouble can "whom all are studious to please, that the "be repaid with pleasure? What danger "dread, to whom every man is a friend?

Such were the thoughts of Almamoulin, as he looked down from a gallery upon the gay assembly, regaling at his expence; but in the midst of this soliloquy an officer of justice entered the house, and, in the form of legal citation summoned Almamoulin to appear before the emperor. The guests stood a while aghast, then stole imperceptibly away, and he was led off without a single voice to witness his integrity. He now found one of his most frequent visitants accusing him of treason, in hopes of sharing his confiscation; yet, unpatronized and unsupported, he cleared himself by the openness of innocence, and the consistence of truth; he was dismissed with honour, and his accuser perished in prison.

Almamoulin now perceived with how little reason he had hoped for justice or fidelity from those who live only to gratify their senses; and, being now weary with vain experiments upon life and fruitless researches after felicity, he had recourse to a sage, who after spending his youth in travel and observation, had retired from all human cares, to a small habitation on the banks of Oxus, where he conversed only with such as solicited his counsel. "Brother," said the philosopher, "thou hast "suffered thy reason to be deluded by idle hopes "and fallacious appearances. Having long looked "with desire upon riches, thou hadst taught thyself "to think them more valuable than nature designed "them, and to expect from them what experience "has now taught thee that they cannot give. "That they do not confer wisdom, thou mayest be "convinced by considering at how dear a price they "*tempted thee*, upon thy first entrance into the

" world, to purchase the empty sound of vul
" clamation. That they cannot bestow forti
" magnanimity, that man may be certain wh
" trembling at Astracan, before a being not n
" ly superior to himself. That they will n
" ply unexhausted pleasure, the recollect
" forsaken palaces, and neglected garden
" easily inform thee." That they rarely pu
" friends, thou didst soon discover, whe
" wert left to stand thy trial uncountenanc
" alone. Yet think not riches useless; th
" purposes, to which a wise man may be del
" to apply them; they may, by a rational
" bution to those who want them, ease the
" of helpless disease, still the throbs of rest
" xiety, relieve innocence from oppressio
" raise imbecility to cheerfulness and
" This they will enable thee to perform, a
" will afford the only happiness ordained
" present state, the confidence of divine
" and the hope of future rewards."

N° 121. TUESDAY, MAY 14, 1751.

O imitatores, servum pecus!

HOR.

Away, ye imitators, servile herd!

ELPHINSTON.

I HAVE been informed by a letter from one of the universities, that among the youth from whom the next swarm of reasoners is to learn philosophy, and the flight of beauties to hear elegies and sonnets, there are many, who, instead of endeavouring by books and meditation to form their own opinions, content themselves with the secondary knowledge which a convenient bench in a coffee-house can supply; and, without any examination or distinction, adopt the criticisms and remarks, which happen to drop from those who have risen, by merit or fortune, to reputation and authority.

These humble retailers of knowledge, my correspondent stigmatizes with the name of Echoes; and seems desirous that they should be made ashamed of lazy submission, and animated to attempts after new discoveries, and original sentiments.

It is very natural for young men to be vehement, acrimonious, and severe. For as they seldom comprehend at once all the consequences of a position, or perceive the difficulties by which cooler and more *experienced* reasoners are restrained

from confidence, they form their conclusions with great precipitance. Seeing nothing that can darken or embarrass the question, they expect to find their own opinion universally prevalent, and are inclined to impute uncertainty and hesitation to want of honesty, rather than of knowledge. I may perhaps, therefore, be reproached by my lively correspondent, when it shall be found, that I have no inclination to persecute these collectors of fortuitous knowledge with the severity required; yet, as I am now too old to be much pained by hasty censure, I shall not be afraid of taking into protection those whom I think condemned without a sufficient knowledge of their cause.

He that adopts the sentiments of another, whom he has reason to believe wiser than himself, is only to be blamed when he claims the honours which are not due but to the author, and endeavours to deceive the world into praise and veneration; for, to learn, is the proper business of youth; and whether we increase our knowledge by books or by conversation, we are equally indebted to foreign assistance.

The greater part of students are not born with abilities to construct systems, or advance knowledge; nor can have any hope beyond that of becoming intelligent hearers in the schools of art, of being able to comprehend what others discover, and to remember what others teach. Even those to whom Providence hath allotted greater strength of understanding, can expect only to improve a single science. In every other part of learning, they must be content to follow opinions, which they were *not able* to examine; and, even in that which they

claim as peculiarly their own, can seldom add more than some small particle of knowledge, to the hereditary stock devolved to them from ancient times, the collective labour of a thousand intellects.

In science, which, being fixed and limited, admits of no other variety than such as arises from new methods of distribution, or new arts of illustration, the necessity of following the traces of our predecessors is indisputably evident; but there appears no reason why imagination should be subject to the same restraint. It might be conceived, that of those who profess to forsake the narrow path of truth every one may deviate towards a different point, since, though rectitude is uniform and fixed, obliquity may be infinitely diversified. The roads of science are narrow, so that they who travel them must either follow or meet one another; but in the boundless regions of possibility which fiction claims for her dominion, there are surely a thousand recesses unexplored, a thousand flowers unplucked, a thousand fountains unexhausted, combinations of imagery yet unobserved, and races of ideal inhabitants not hitherto described.

Yet whatever hope may persuade, or reason evince, experience can boast of very few additions to ancient fable. The wars of Troy, and the travels of Ulysses, have furnished almost all succeeding poets with incidents, characters, and sentiments. The Romans are confessed to have attempted little more than to display in their own tongue the inventions of the Greeks. There is, in all their writings, such a perpetual recurrence of allusions to the tales of the fabulous age, that they

must be confessed often to want that power of giving pleasure which novelty supplies; nor can we wonder that they excelled so much in the graces of diction, when we consider how rarely they were employed in search of new thoughts.

The warmest admirers of the great Mantuan poet, can extol him for little more than the skill with which he has, by making his hero both a traveller and a warrior, united the beauties of the Iliad and the Odyssey in one composition: yet his judgment was perhaps sometimes overborne by his avarice of the Homerick treasures; and for fear of suffering a sparkling ornament to be lost, he has inserted it where it cannot shine with its original splendour.

When Ulysses visited the infernal regions, he found among the heroes that perished at Troy, his competitor Ajax, who, when the arms of Achilles were adjudged to Ulysses, died by his own hand in the madness of disappointment. He still appeared to resent, as on earth, the loss and disgrace. Ulysses endeavoured to pacify him with praises and submission; but Ajax walked away without reply. This passage has always been considered as eminenly beautiful; because Ajax, the haughty chief, the unlettered soldier, of unshaken courage, of immoveable constancy, but without the power of recommending his own virtues by eloquence, or enforcing his assertions by any other argument than the sword, had no way of making his anger known but by gloomy sullenness and dumb ferocity. His hatred of a man whom he conceived to have defeated him only by *volubility of* tongue, was therefore naturally shewn

by silence more contemptuous and piercing than any words that so rude an orator could have found, and by which he gave his enemy no opportunity of exerting the only power in which he was superior.

When Æneas is sent by Virgil to the shades, he meets Dido the queen of Carthage, whom his prefidy had hurried to the grave; he accosts her with tenderness and excuses; but the lady turns away like Ajax, in mute disdain. She turns away like Ajax; but she resembles him in none of those qualities which give either dignity or propriety to silence. She might without any departure from the tenour of her conduct, have burst out like other injured women into clamour, reproach and denunciation; but Virgil had his imagination full of Ajax, and therefore could not prevail on himself to teach Dido any other mode of resentment.

If Virgil could be thus seduced by imtation, there will be little hope that common wits should escape; and accordingly we find, that, besides the universal and acknowledged practice of copying the ancients, there has prevailed in every age a particular species of fiction. At one time all truth was conveyed in allegory; at another, nothing was seen but in a vision; at one period all the poets followed sheep, and every event produced a pastoral; at another, they busied themselves wholly in giving directions to a painter.

It is indeed easy to conceive why any fashion should become popular, by which idleness is favoured, and imbecility assisted; but surely no man of *genius can much* applaud himself for repeating

a tale with which the audience is already tired, and which could bring no honour to any but its inventor.

There are, I think, two schemes of writing, on which the laborious wits of the present time employ their faculties. One is the adaptation of sense to all the rhymes which our language can supply to some word, that makes the burden of the stanza; but this, as it has been only used in a kind of amorous burlesque, can scarcely be censured with much acrimony. The other is the imitation of Spencer, which, by the influence of some men of learning and genius, seems likely to gain upon the age, and therefore deserves to be more attentively considered.

To imitate the fictions and sentiments of Spencer can incur no reproach, for allegory is perhaps one of the most pleasing vehicles of instruction. But I am very far from extending the same respect to his diction or his stanza. His style was in his own time allowed to be vicious, so darkened with old words and peculiarities of phrase, and so remote from common use, that Johnson boldly pronounces him to have written no language. His stanza is at once difficult and unpleasing; tiresome to the ear by its uniformity, and to the attention by its length. It was at first formed in imitation of the Italian poets, without due regard to the genius of our language. The Italians have little variety of termination, and were forced to contrive such a stanza as might admit the greatest number of similar rhymes; but our words end with so much diversity, that it is seldom convenient for us to bring more than two of the

same sound together. If it be justly observed by Milton, that rhyme obliges poets to express their thoughts in improper terms, these improprieties must always be multiplied, as the difficulty of rhyme is increased by long concatenations.

The imitators of Spencer are indeed not very rigid censors of themselves, for they seem to conclude, that when they have disfigured their lines with a few obsolete syllables, they have accomplished their design, without considering that they ought not only to admit old words, but to avoid new. The laws of imitation are broken by every word introduced since the time of Spencer, as the character of Hector is violated by quoting Aristotle in the play. It would indeed be difficult to exclude from a long poem all modern phrases, though it is easy to sprinkle it with gleanings of antiquity. Perhaps, however, the style of Spencer might by long labour be justly copied; but life is surely given us for higher purposes than to gather what our ancestors have wisely thrown away, and to learn what is of no value, but because it has been forgotten.

N° 122. SATURDAY, MAY 18,

Nescio qua natale solum dulcedine cunctos
Ducit.

By secret charms our native land attracts.

NOTHING is more subject to mistake an
pointment than anticipated judgment co
the easiness or difficulty of any undertaki
ther we form our opinion from the perf
of others, or from abstracted contemplati
thing to be attempted.

Whatever is done skilfully appears to
with ease; and art, when it is once mat
habit, vanishes from observation. We a
fore more powerfully excited to emulation,
who have attained the highest degree o
lence, and whom we can therefore with l
son hope to equal.

In adjusting the probability of succe
previous consideration of the undertaking
equally in danger of deceiving ourselves.
never easy, nor often possible, to comprise
ries of any process, with all its circumsta
cidents, and variations, in a speculative
Experience soon shews us the tortuosities
ginary rectitude, the complications of sin
and the asperities of amoothness. Sudd
culties often start up from the ambushes
stop the career of activity, repress the g

confidence, and when we imagine ourselves almost at the end of our labours, drive us back to new plans and different measures.

There are many things which we every day see others unable to perform, and perhaps have even ourselves miscarried in attempting, and yet can hardly allow to be difficult; nor can we forbear to wonder afresh at every new failure, or to promise certainty of success to our next essay; but when we try, the same hindrances recur, the same inability is perceived, and the vexation of disappointment must again be suffered.

Of the various kinds of speaking or writing, which serve necessity, or promote pleasure, none appears so artless or easy as simple narration; for what should make him that knows the whole order and progress of an affair unable to relate it? Yet we hourly find such as endeavour to entertain or instruct us by recitals, clouding the facts which they intend to illustrate, and losing themselves and their auditors in wilds and mazes, in digression and confusion. When we have congratulated ourselves upon a new opportunity of inquiry, and new means of information, it often happens, that without designing either deceit or concealment, without ignorance of the fact, or unwillingness to disclose it, the relater fills the ear with empty sounds, harasses the attention with fruitless impatience, and disturbs the imagination by a tumult of events, without order of time, or train of consequence.

It is natural to believe, upon the same principle, that no writer has a more easy task than the historian. The *philosopher* has the works of omni-

science to examine; and is therefore engaged disquisitions, to which finite intellects are utter unequal. The poet trusts to his invention, and not only in danger of those inconsistencies, which every one is exposed by departure fro truth; but may be censured as well for deficie cies of matter, as for irregularity of dispositio or impropriety of ornament. But the happy hi torian has no other labour than of gethering wh tradition pours down before him, or recor treasure for his use. He has only the actio and designs of men like himself to conceive a to relate; he has not to form, but copy chara ters, and therefore is not blamed for the inconsis ency of statesmen, the injustice of tyrants, or t cowardice of commanders. The difficulty making variety consistent, or uniting probabili with surprise, needs not to disturb him; the ma ners and actions of his personages are already fi ed; his materials are provided and put into h hands, and he is at leisure to employ all his pow ers in arranging and displaying them.

Yet, even with these advantages very few i any age have been able to raise themselves to r putation by writing histories; and among the in numerable authors, who fill every nation with a counts of their ancestors, or undertake to transm to futurity the events of their own time, th greater part, when fashion and novelty have cease to recommend them, are of no other use tha chronological memorials, which necessity ma sometimes require to be consulted, but whic fright away curiosity, and disgust delicacy.

It is observed, that our nation, which has pro

duced so many authors eminent for almost every other species of literary excellence, has been hitherto remarkably barren of historical genius; and so far has this defect raised prejudices against us, that some have doubted, whether an Englishman can stop at that mediocrity of style, or confine his mind to that even tenour of imagination, which narrative requires.

They who can believe that nature has so capriciously distributed understanding, have surely no claim to the honour of serious confutation. The inhabitants of the same country have opposite characters in different ages; the prevalence or neglect of any particular study can proceed only from the accidental influence of some temporary cause; and if we have failed in history, we have failed only because history has not hitherto been diligently cultivated.

But how is it evident, that we have not historians among us, whom we may venture to place in comparison with any that the neghbouring nations can produce? The attempt of Raleigh is deservedly celebrated for the labour of his researches, and the elegance of his style; but he has endeavoured to exert his judgment more than his genius, to select facts, rather than adorn them; and has produced an historical dissertation, but seldom risen to the majesty of history.

The works of Clarendon deserve more regard. His diction is indeed neither exact in itself, nor suited to the purpose of history. It is the effusion of a mind crowded with ideas, and desirous of imparting them; and therefore always accumulating words, and involving one clause and sen-

tence in another. But there is in his negligence a rude inartifical majesty, which, without the nicety of laboured elegance, swells the mind by its plenitude and diffusion. His narration is not perhaps sufficiently rapid, being stopped too frequently by particularities, which, though they might strike the author who was present at the transactions, will not equally detain the attention of posterity. But his ignorance or carelessness of the art of writing are amply compensated by his knowledge of nature and of policy, the wisdom of his maxims, the justness of his reasonings, and the variety, distinctness, and strength of his characters.

But none of our writers can, in my opinion, justly contest the superiority of Knolles, who, in his history of the Turks, has displayed all the excellencies that narration can admit. His style, though somewhat obscured by time, and sometimes vitiated by false wit, is pure, nervous, elevated, and clear. A wonderful multiplicity of events is so artfully arranged, and so distinctly explained, that each facilitates the knowledge of the next. Whenever a new personage is introduced, the reader is prepared by his character for his actions; when a nation is first attacked, or city besieged, he is made acquainted with its history, or situation; so that a great part of the world is brought into view. The descriptions of this author are without minuteness, and the digressions without ostentation. Collateral events are so artfully woven into the contexture of his principal story, that they cannot be disjoined, without leaving it lacerated and broken. There is nothing turgid in his dignity, nor superfluous in his copiousness. His

orations only, which he feigns, like the ancient historians, to have been pronounced on remarkable occasions, are tedious and languid; and since they are merely the voluntary sports of imagination, prove how much the most judicious and skilful may be mistaken, in the estimate of their own powers.

Nothing could have sunk this author in obscurity, but the remoteness and barbarity of the people whose story he relates. It seldom happens, that all circumstances concur to happiness or fame. The nation which produced this great historian, has the grief of seeing his genius employed upon a foreign and uninteresting subject; and that writer, who might have secured perpetuity to his name, by a history of his own country, has exposed himself to the danger of oblivion, by recounting enterprizes and revolutions, of which none desire to be informed.

N° 123. TUESDAY, MAY 21, 1751.

Quo semel est imbuta recens, servabit odorem
Testa diu.

HOR.

What season'd first the vessel, keeps the taste.

CREECH.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH I have so long found myself deluded by projects of honour and distinction, that I often resolve to admit them no more into my heart; yet, how determinately soever excluded, they always recover their dominion by force or stratagem; and whenever, after the shortest relaxation of vigilance, reason and caution return to their charge, they find hope again in possession, with all her train of pleasures dancing about her.

Even while I am preparing to write a history of disappointed expectations, I cannot forbear to flatter myself, that you and your readers are impatient for my performance; and that the sons of learning have laid down several of your late papers with discontent, when they found that Mysocapelus had delayed to continue his narrative.

But the desire of gratifying the expectations that I have raised, is not the only motive of this *relation, which,* having once promised it, I think

myself no longer at liberty to forbear. For however I may have wished to clear myself from every other adhesion of trade, I hope I shall be always wise enough to retain my punctuality, and amidst all my new arts of politeness, continue to despise negligence, and detect falsehood.

When the death of my brother had dismissed me from the duties of a shop, I considered myself as restored to the rights of my birth, and entitled to the rank and reception which my ancestors obtained. I was, however embarrassed with many difficulties at my first re-entrance into the world; for my haste to be a gentleman inclined me to precipitate measures; and every accident that forced me back towards my old station, was considered by me as an obstruction to my happiness.

It was with no common grief and indignation, that I found my former companions still daring to claim my notice, and the journeymen and apprentices sometimes pulling me by the sleeves as I was walking in the street, and without any terror of my new sword, which was, notwithstanding, of an uncommon size, inviting me to partake of a bottle at the old house, and entertaining me with histories of the girls in the neighbourhood. I had always, in my official state, been kept in awe by lace and embroidery, and imagined that to fright away these unwelcome familiarities, nothing was necessary, but that I should, by splendour of dress, proclaim my reunion with a higher rank. I therefore sent for my tailor; ordered a suit with twice the usual quantity of lace; and *that I might not let my* persecutors increase their

confidence, by the habit of accosting me, staid at home till it was made.

This week of confinement I passed in practising a forbidding frown, a smile of condescension, a slight salutation, and an abrupt departure; and in four mornings was able to turn upon my heel, with so much levity and sprightliness, that I made no doubt of discouraging all public attempts upon my dignity. I therefore issued forth in my new coat, with a resolution of dazzling intimacy to a fitter distance; and pleased myself with the timidity and reverence which I should impress upon all who had hitherto presumed to harass me with their freedoms. But whatever was the cause, I did not find myself received with any new degree of respect; those whom I intended to drive from me, ventured to advance with their usual phrases of benevolence; and those whose acquaintance I solicited, grew more supercilious and reserved. I began soon to repent the expence, by which I had procured no advantage, and to suspect that a shining dress, like a weighty weapon, has no force in itself, but owes all its efficacy to him that wears it.

Many were the mortifications and calamities which I was condemned to suffer in my initiation to politeness. I was so much tortured by the incessant civilities of my companions, that I never passed through that region of the city but in a chair with the curtains drawn; and at last left my lodgings, and fixed myself in the verge of the court. Here I endeavoured to be thought a gentleman just returned from his travels, and was *pleased to* have my landlord believe, that I was

n some danger from importunate creditors; but his scheme was quickly defeated by a formal deputation sent to offer me, though I had now retired from business, the freedom of my company.

I was now detected in trade, and therefore resolved to stay no longer. I hired another apartment, and changed my servants. Here I lived very happily for three months, and, with secret satisfaction, often overheard the family celebrating the greatness and felicity of the esquire; though the conversation seldom ended without some complaint of my covetousness, or some remark upon my language, or my gait. I now began to venture into the publick walks, and to know the faces of nobles and beauties; but could not observe without wonder as I passed by them how frequently they were talking of a tailor. I longed, however, to be admitted to conversation, and was somewhat weary of walking in crowds without a companion, yet continued to come and go with the rest, till a lady whom I endeavoured to protect in a crowded passage, as she was about to step into her chariot, thanked me for my civility, and told me, that, as she had often distinguished me from my modest and respectful behaviour, whenever I set up for myself, I might expect to see her among my first customers.

Here was an end of all my ambulatory projects. I indeed sometimes entered the walks again, but was always blasted by this destructive lady, whose mischievous generosity recommended me to her acquaintance. Being therefore forced to practise my adscititious character upon another stage, *I betook myself* to a coffee-house frequented by

wits, among whom I learned in a short time the cant of criticism, and talked so loudly and volubly of nature, and manners, and sentiment, and diction and similies, and contrasts, and action, and pronunication, that I was often desired to lead the hiss and clap, and was feared and hated by the players and the poets. Many a sentence have I hissed, which I did not understand, and many a groan have I uttered, when the ladies were weeping in the boxes. At last a malignant author, whose performance I had persecuted through the nine nights, wrote an epigram upon Tape the critick, which drove me from the pit for ever.

My desire to be a fine gentleman still continued: I therefore, after a short suspense, chose a new set of friends at the gaming-table, and was for some time pleased with the civility and openness with which I found myself treated. I was indeed obliged to play; but being naturally timorous and vigilant, was never surprised into large sums. What might have been the consequence of long familiarity with these plunderers, I had not an opportunity of knowing; for one night the constables entered and seized us, and I was once more compelled to sink into my former condition, by sending for my old master to attest my character.

When I was deliberating to what new qualifications I should aspire, I was summoned into the country, by an account of my father's death. Here I had hopes of being able to distinguish myself, and to support the honour of my family. I therefore bought guns and horses, and contrary to the expectation of the tenants, increased the salary of the huntsman. But when I entered the field,

it was soon discovered that I was not destined to the glories of the chace. I was afraid of thorns in the thicket, and of dirt in the marsh; I shivered on the brink of a river while the sportsmen crossed it, and trembled at the sight of a five-bar gate. When the sport and danger were over, I was still equally disconcerted; for I was effeminate, though not delicate, and could only join a feebly whispering voice in the clamours of their triumph.

A fall, by which my ribs were broken, soon recalled me to domestick pleasures, and I exerted all my art to obtain the favour of the neighbouring ladies; but wherever I came, there was always some unlucky conversation upon ribbands, fillets, pins, or threads, which drove all my stock of compliments out of my memory, and overwhelmed me with shame and dejection.

Thus I passed the ten first years after the death of my brother, in which I have learned at last to repress that ambition which I could never gratify; and instead of wasting more of my life in vain endeavours after accomplishments, which, if not early acquired, no endeavours can obtain, I shall confine my care to those higher excellencies which are in every man's power; and though I cannot enchant affection by elegance and ease, hope to secure esteem by honesty and truth.

I am, &c.

MISOCAPELUS.

N° 124. SATURDAY, MAY 25, 1751.

——Tacitum sylvas inter reptare salubres,
Curantem quicquid dignum sapiente bonoque est.
HOR.

To range in silence through each healthful wood,
And muse what's worthy of the wise and good.
ELPHINSTON.

THE season of the year is now come, in which the theatres are shut, and the card-tables forsaken; the regions of luxury are for a while unpeopled, and pleasure leads out her votaries to groves and gardens, to still scenes and erratick gratifications. Those who have passed many months in a continual tumult of diversion; who have never opened their eyes in the morning, but upon some new appointment; nor slept at night without a dream of dances, musick, and good hands, or of soft sighs and humble supplications; must now retire to distant provinces, where the sirens of flattery are scarcely to be heard, where beauty sparkles without praise or envy, and wit is repeated only by the echo.

As I think it one of the most important duties of social benevolence to give warning of the approach of calamity, when by timely prevention it may be turned aside, or by preparatory measures *be more easily* endured, I cannot feel the increas-

ing warmth, or observe the lengthening days, without considering the condition of my fair readers, who are now preparing to leave all that has so long filled up their hours, all from which they have been accustomed to hope for delight; and who, till fashion proclaims the liberty of returning to the seats of mirth and elegance, must endure the rugged 'squire, the sober housewife, the loud huntsman, or the formal parson, the roar of obstreperous jollity, or the dulness of prudential instruction; without any retreat, but to the gloom of solitude, where they will yet find greater inconveniencies, and must learn, however unwillingly, to endure themselves.

In winter, the life of the polite and gay may be said to roll on with a strong and rapid current; they float along from pleasure to pleasure, without the trouble of regulating their own motions, and pursue the course of the stream in all the felicity of inattention; content that they find themselves in progression, and careless whither they are going. But the months of summer are a kind of sleeping stagnation without wind or tide, where they are left to force themselves forward by their own labour, and to direct their passage by their own skill; and where, if they have not some internal principle of activity, they must be stranded upon shallows, or lie torpid in a perpetual calm.

There are, indeed, some to whom this universal dissolution of gay societies affords a welcome opportunity of quitting, without disgrace, the post which they have found themselves unable to maintain; and of seeming to retreat only at the call of nature, from assemblies where, after a short

triumph of uncontested superiority, they are overpowered by some new intruder of softer elegance or sprightlier vivacity. By these, hopeless of victory, and yet ashamed to confess a conquest, the summer is regarded as a release from the fatiguing service of celebrity, a dismission to more certain joys and a safer empire. They now solace themselves with the influence which they shall obtain, where they have no rival to fear; and with the lustre which they shall effuse, when nothing can be seen of brighter splendour. They imagine, while they are preparing for their journey, the admiration with which the rusticks will crowd about them; plan the laws of a new assembly; or contrive to delude provincial ignorance with a fictitious mode. A thousand pleasing expectations swarm in the fancy; and all the approaching weeks are filled with distinctions, honours, and authority.

But others, who have lately entered the world, or have yet had no proofs of its inconstancy and desertion, are cut off, by this cruel interruption, from the enjoyment of their prerogatives, and doomed to lose four months in inactive obscurity. Many complaints do vexation and desire extort from those exiled tyrants of the town, against the inexorable sun, who pursues his course without any regard to love or beauty; and visits either tropick at the stated time, whether shunned or courted, deprecated or implored.

To them who leave the places of publick resort in the full bloom of reputation, and withdraw from admiration, courtship, submission, and applause; a rural triumph can give nothing equivalent.—

The praise of ignorance, and the subjection of weakness, are little regarded by beauties who have been accustomed to more important conquests, and more valuable panegyricks. Nor indeed should the powers which have made havock in the theatres, or borne down rivalry in courts, be degraded to a mean attack upon the untravelled heir, or ignoble contest with the ruddy milkmaid.

How then must four long months be worn away? Four months, in which there will be no routs, no shows, no ridottos; in which visits must be regulated by the weather, and assemblies will depend upon the moon! The Platonists imagine that the future punishment of those who have in this life debased their reason by subjection to their senses, and have preferred the gross gratifications of lewdness and luxury, to the pure and sublime felicity of virtue and contemplation, will arise from the predominance and solicitation of the same appetites, in a state which can furnish no means of appeasing them. I cannot but suspect that this month, bright and sunshine, and fragrant with perfumes; this month which covers the meadow with verdure, and decks the gardens with all the mixtures of colorifick radiance; this month, from which the man of fancy expects new infusions of imagery, and the naturalist new scenes of observation; this month will chain down multitudes to the Platonick penance of desire without enjoyment, and hurry them from the highest satisfactions, which they have yet learned to conceive, into a state of hopeless wishes and pining recollection, where the eye of vanity will look round for admiration to no purpose, and the hand of

avarice shuffle cards in a bower with ineffectual dexterity.

From the tediousness of this melancholy suspension of life, I would willingly preserve those who are exposed to it only by inexperience; who want not inclination to wisdom or virtue, though they have been dissipated by negligence, or misled by example; and who would gladly find the way to rational happiness, though it should be necessary to struggle with habit, and abandon fashion. To these many arts of spending time might be recommended, which would neither sadden the present hour with weariness, nor the future with repentance.

It would seem impossible to a solitary speculatist, that a human being can want employment. To be born in ignorance with a capacity of knowledge, and to be placed in the midst of a world filled with variety, perpetually pressing upon the senses and irritating curiosity, is surely a sufficient security against the languishment of inattention. Novelty is indeed necessary to preserve eagerness and alacrity; but art and nature have stores inexhaustible by human intellects; and every moment produces something new to him who has quickened his faculties by diligent observation.

Some studies, for which the country and the summer afford peculiar opportunities, I shall perhaps endeavour to recommend in a future essay; but if there be any apprehension not apt to admit unaccustomed ideas, or any attention so stubborn and inflexible, as not easily to comply with new directions, even these obstructions cannot exclude *the pleasure of* application; for there is a higher

and nobler employment, to which all faculties are adapted by him who gave them. The duties of religion, sincerely and regularly performed, will always be sufficient to exalt the meanest, and to exercise the highest understanding. That mind will never be vacant, which is frequently recalled by stated duties to meditations on eternal interests: nor can any hour be long, which is spent in obtaining some new qualification for celestial happiness.

N° 125. TUESDAY, MAY 28, 1751.

Descriptas servare vices, operumque colores,
Cur ego, si nequeo ignoroque, poeta salutor?

HOR.

But if, through weakness, or my want of art,
I can't to ev'ry different style impart
The proper strokes and colorus it may claim
Why am I honour'd with a poet's name?

FRANCIS.

It is one of the maxims of the civil law, that *definitions are hazardous*. Things modified by human understandings, subject to varieties of complication, and changeable as experience advances knowledge, or accident influences caprice, are scarcely to be included in any standing form of expression, because they are always suffering some alteration of their state. Definition is indeed not the province of man; every thing is set above or

below our faculties. The works and operations of nature are too great in their extent, or too much diffused in their relations, and the performances of art too inconstant and uncertain, to be reduced to any determinate idea. It is impossible to impress upon our minds an adequate and just representation of an object so great that we can never take into our view, or so mutable that it is always changed under our eye, and has already lost its form while we are labouring to conceive it.

Definitions have been no less difficult or uncertain in criticisms than in law. Imagination, a licentious and vagrant faculty, unsusceptible of limitations, and impatient of restraint, has always endeavoured to baffle the logician, to perplex the confines of distinction, and burst the inclosure of regularity. There is therefore scarcely any species of writing, of which we can tell what is its essence, and what are its constituents; every new genius produces some innovation, which, when invented and approved, subverts the rules which the practice of foregoing authors had established.

Comedy has been particularly unpropitious to definers; for though perhaps they might properly have contented themselves, with declaring it to be *such a dramatick representation of human life, as may excite mirth*, they have embarrassed their definition with the means by which the comick writers attain their end, without considering that the various methods of exhilarating their audience, not being limited by nature, cannot be comprised in precept. Thus, some make comedy a representation of mean, and others of bad men; some think that

its essence consists in the unimportance, others in the fictitiousness of the transaction. But any man's reflections will inform him, that every dramatick composition which raises mirth is comick; and that, to raise mirth, it is by no means universally necessary, that the personages should be either mean or corrupt, nor always requisite, that the action should be trivial, nor ever, that it should be fictitious.

If the two kinds of dramatick poetry had been defined only by their effects upon the mind, some absurdities might have been prevented, with which the compositions of our greatest poets are disgraced, who, for want of some settled ideas and accurate distinctions, have unhappily confounded tragick with comick sentiments. They seem to have thought, that as the meanness of personages constituted comedy, their greatness was sufficient to form a tragedy; and that nothing was necessary but that they should crowd the scene with monarchs, and generals, and guards; and make them talk at certain intervals of the downfal of kingdoms, and the rout of armies. They have not considered, that thoughts, or incidents in themselves ridiculous, grow still more grotesque by the solemnity of such characters; that reason and nature are uniform and inflexible; and that what is despicable and absurd, will not, by any association with splendid titles, become rational or great; that the most important affairs, by an intermixture of an unseasonable levity, may be made contemptible; and that the robes of royalty can give no dignity to nonsense or to folly.

" Comedy," says Horace, " sometin
" her voice ;" and tragedy may likweis
per occasions abate her dignity ; but a
mick personages can only depart from th
liarity of style, when the more violent pa
put in motion, the heroes and queens of
should never descend to trifle, but in the
ease, and intermissions of danger. Yet ir
gedy of *Don Sebastian*, when the king of
is in the hands of his enemy, and having ju
the lot by which he is condemned to di
ont into a wild boast that his dust shall
session of Africk, the dialogue proceeds
tween the captive and his conqueror :

Muley Moluch. What shall I do to conque
Seb. Impossible :
Souls know no conquerors.
M. Mol. I'll shew thee for a monster thro'
Seb. No thou canst only shew me for a ma
Africk is stor'd with monsters ; man's a prodi
Thy subjects have not seen.
M. Mol. Thou talk'st as if
Still at the head of battle.
Seb. Thou mistak'st,
For there I would not talk.
Benducar, the Minister. Sure he would sle

This conversation, with the sly rema
minister, can only be found not to be comick
it wants the probability necessary to repres
of common life, and degenerates too much
buffoonery and farce.

The same play affords a smart retur
general to the emperor, who, enforcing l

for the death of Sebastian, vents his impatience in this abrupt threat;

——No more replies,
But see thou do'st it; Or——

To which Dorax answers,

Choak in that threat: I can say Or as loud.

A thousand instances of such impropriety might be produced, were not one scene in *Aureng-Zebe* sufficient to exemplify it. *Indamora*, a captive queen, having *Aureng-Zebe* for her lover, employs *Arimant*, to whose charge she had been entrusted, and whom she had made sensible of her charms, to carry her message to his rival.

ARIMANT, *with a letter in his hand:* INDAMORA.

Arim. And I the messenger to him from you?
Your empire you to tyranny pursue:
You lay commands, both cruel and unjust,
To serve my rival, and betray my trust.
Ind. You first betray'd your truſt in loving me;
And ſhould not I my own advantage see?
Serving my love, you may my friendship gain;
You know the rest of your pretences vain.
You must, my Arimant, you must be kind;
'Tis in your nature, and your noble mind.
Arim. I'll to the king, and ſtrait my trust resign.
Ind. His trust you may, but you shall never mine.
Heav'n made you love me for no other end,
But to become my confidant and friend;
As such, I keep no secret from your sight,
And therefore make you judge how ill I write;
Read it, and tell me freely then your mind,
If 'tis indited, as I meant it kind.

Arim. I ask not heav'n my freedom to restore, [Reads.
But only for your sake——I'll read no more.
And yet I must——
Less for my own, than for your sorrow sad— [Reading.
Another line, like this, would make me mad——
Heav'n! she goes on——yet more—and yet more kind.
[As reading.
Each sentence is a dagger to my mind.
See me this night—— [Reading.
Thank fortune, who did such a friend provide;
For faithful Arimant *shall be your guide:*
Not only to be made an instrument,
But pre-engag'd without my own consent!
Ind. Unknown t' engage you, still augments my score,
And gives you scope of meriting the more.
Arim. The best of men
Some int'rest in their actions must confess;
None merit, but in hope they may possess:
The fatal paper rather let me tear,
Than, like *Belleropon*, my own sentence bear.
Ind. You may: but 'twill not be your best advice;
'Twill only give me pains of writing twice.
You know you must obey me, soon or late:
Why should you vainly struggle with your fate?
Arim. I thank thee, heav'n! thou hast been wond'rous kind!
Why am I thus to slavery design'd,
And yet am cheated with a freeborn mind!
Or make thy orders with my reason suit,
Or let me live by sense, a glorious brute—[*She frowns.*
You frown, and I obey with speed, before
'That dreadful sentence comes, *See me no more.*

In this scene, every circumstance concurs to turn tragedy to farce. The wild absurdity of the expedient; the contemptible subjection of the lover; the folly of obliging him to read the letter, only because it ought to have been concealed from him;

the frequent interruptions of amorous impatience; the faint expostulations of a voluntary slave; the imperious haughtiness of a tyrant without power; the deep reflection of the yielding rebel upon fate and free will; and his wise wish to lose his reason as soon as he finds himself about to do what he cannot persuade his reason to approve, are surely sufficient to awaken the most torpid risibility.

There is scarce a tragedy of the last century which has not debased its most important incidents, and polluted its most serious interlocutions with buffoonery and meanness; but though perhaps it cannot be pretended that the present age has added much to the force and efficacy of the drama, it has at least been able to escape many faults, which either ignorance had overlooked or indulgence had licensed. The later tragedies indeed have faults of another kind, perhaps more destructive to delight, though less open to censure. That perpetual tumour of phrase with which every thought is now expressed by every personage, the paucity of adventures, which regularity admits, and the unvaried equality of flowing dialogue, has taken away from our present writers almost all that dominion over the passions which was the boast of their predecessors. Yet they may at least claim this commendation, that they avoid gross faults, and that if they cannot often move terror or pity, they are always careful not to provoke laughter.

N° 126. SATURDAY, JUNE 1, 175

—Nihil est aliud magnum quam multa minuta.
VET. A

Sands form the mountain, moments make the y
YOUNG

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR

AMONG other topicks of conversation which papers supply, I was lately engaged in a cussion of the character given by Tranquil her lover Venustulus, whom, notwithstandin severity of his mistress, the greater number se inclined to acquit of unmanly or culpable tim

One of the company remarked, that pru ought to be distinguished from fear; and t Venustulus was afraid of nocturnal adventur man who considered how much every avenue town was infested with robbers could thin blameable; for why should life be hazarded out prospect of honour or advantage? An was of opinion, that a brave man might be of crossing the river in the calmest weather declared, that for his part, while there were co and the bridge, he would never be seen totter a wooden case, out of which he might be thro any irregular agitation, or which might be

by accident, negligence, or by the force of a sudden gust, or the rush of a larger vessel. It was his custom, he said, to keep the security of daylight, and dry ground; for it was a maxim with him, that no wise man ever perished by water, or was lost in the dark.

The next was humbly of opinion, that if Tranquilla had seen, like him, the cattle run roaring about the meadows in the hot months, she would not have thought meanly of her lover for not venturing his safety among them. His neighbour then told us, that for his part he was not ashamed to confess that he could not see a rat, though it was dead, without palpitation; that he had been driven six times out of his lodgings either by rats or mice; and that he always had a bed in the closet for his servants, whom he called up whenever the enemy was in motion. Another wondered, that any man should think himself disgraced by a precipitate retreat from a dog; for there is always a possibility that a dog might be mad; and that surely, though there was no danger but of being bit by a fierce animal, there was more wisdom in flight than contest. By all these declarations another was encouraged to confess, that if he had been admitted to the honour of paying his addresses to Tranquilla, she should have been likely to incur the same censure; for among all the animals upon which nature has impressed deformity and horrour, there was none whom he durst not encounter rather than a beetle.

Thus, Sir, though cowardice is universally defined, too close and anxious an attention to personal safety, there will be found scarcely any fear, how-

ever excessive in its degree or unreasonable in its object, which will be allowed to characterize a coward. Fear is a passion, which every man feels so frequently predominant in his own breast, that he is unwilling to hear it censured with asperity; and perhaps if we confess the truth, the same restraint which would hinder a man from declaiming against the frauds of any employment among those who profess it, should withhold him from treating fear with contempt among human beings.

Yet since fortitude is one of those virtues which the conditon of our nature makes hourly necessary, I think you cannot better direct your admonitions than against superfluous and panick terrors. Fear is implanted in us as a preservative from evil: but its duty, like that of other passions, is not to overbear reason but to assist it; nor should it be suffered to tyrannize in the imagination, to raise phantoms of horror, or beset life with supernumerary distresses.

To be always afraid of losing life is, indeed, scarcely to enjoy a life that can deserve the care of preservation. He that once indulges idle fears will never be at rest. Our present state admits only of a kind of negative security; we must conclude ourselves safe when we see no danger, or none adequate to our powers of opposition. Death indeed continually hovers about us, but hovers commonly unseen, unless we sharpen our sight by useless curiosity.

There is always a point at which caution, however solicitous, must limit its preservatives, because one terror often counteracts another. I once knew *one of the* speculists of cowardice, whose reigning

disturbance was the dread of house-breakers. His inquiries were for nine years employed upon the best method of barring a window, or a door; and many an hour has he spent in establishing the preference of a bolt to a lock. He had at last, by the daily superaddition of new expedients, contrived a door which could never be forced; for one bar was secured by another with such intricacy of subordination, that he was himself not always able to disengage them in the proper method. He was happy in this fortification, till being asked how he would escape if he was threatened by fire, he discovered, that with all his care and expence, he had only been assisting his own destruction. He then immediately tore off his bolts, and now leaves at night his outer door half-locked, that he may not by his own folly perish in the flames.

There is one species of terror which those who are unwilling to suffer the reproach of cowardice have wisely dignified with the name of antipathy. A man who talks with intrepidity of the monsters of the wilderness while they are out of sight, will readily confess his antipathy to a mole, a weasel, or a frog. He has indeed no dread of harm from an insect or a worm, but his antipathy turns him pale whenever they approach him. He believes that a boat will transport him with as much safety as his neighbours, but he cannot conquer his antipathy to the water. Thus he goes on without any reproach from his own reflections, and every day multiplies antipathies, till he becomes contemptible to others, and burdensome to himself.

It is indeed certain, that impressions of dread *may sometimes be* unluckily made by objects not in

themselves justly formidable; but when fear is discovered to be groundless, it is to be eradicated like other false opinions, and antipathies are generally superable by a single effort. He that has been taught to shudder at a mouse, if he can persuade himself to risque one encounter, will find his own superiority, and exchange his terrors for the pride of conquest.

I am, Sir, &c.

THRASO.

" SIR,

" As you profess to extend your regard to the " minuteness of decency, as well as to the dignity " of science, I cannot forbear to lay before you a " mode of persecution by which I have been exiled " to taverns and coffee-houses, and deterred from " entering the doors of my friends.

" Among the ladies who please themselves with " splended furniture, or elegant entertainment, it " is a practice very common, to ask every guest " how he likes the carved work of the cornice, or " the figures of the tapestry; the china at the " table, or the plate on the side-board; and on all " occasions to inquire his opinion of their judg- " ment and their choice. Melania has laid her " new watch in the window nineteen times, that " she may desire me to look upon it. Calista has " an art of dropping her snuff-box by drawing out " her handkerchief, that when I pick it up I " may admire it; and Fulgentia has conducted " me, by mistake, into a wrong room, at every

" visit I have paid since her picture was put into " a new frame.

" I hope, Mr. Rambler, you will inform them, " that no man should be denied the privilege of " silence, or tortured to false declarations; and " that though ladies may justly claim to be " exempt from rudeness, they have no right to " force unwilling civilities. To please is a laud- " able and elegant ambition, and is properly re- " warded with honest praise; but to seize ap- " plause by violence, and call out for commenda- " tion, without knowing, or caring to know, " whether it be given from conviction, is a species " of tyranny by which modesty is oppressed and " sincerity corrupted. The tribute of admiration " thus exacted by impudence and importunity, " differs from the respect paid to silent merit, as " the plunder of a pirate from the merchant's " profit.

" I am, &c.

" MISOCOLAX."

" SIR,

" Your great predecessor, the Spectator, en- " deavoured to diffuse among his female readers a " desire of knowledge; nor can I charge you, " though you do not seem equally attentive to the " ladies, with endeavouring to discourage them " from any laudable pursuit. But however either " he or you may excite our curiosity, you have " not yet informed us how it may be gratified. " The world seems to have formed an universal " conspiracy against our understandings; our que- " stions are supposed not to expect answers, our

" arguments are confuted with a jest, an
" treated like beings who transgress the
" our nature whenever we aspire to serio
" improvement.

" I inquired yesterday of a gentleman
" for astronomical skill, what made the
" in summer, and short in winter; and
" that nature protracted the days in sum
" ladies should want time to walk in th
" and the nights in winter, lest they sho
" have hours sufficient to spend at the ca

" I hope you do not doubt but I he
" information with just contempt; and I d
" to discover to this great master of ridic
" I was far from wanting any intelligenc
" he could have given me. I asked the
" with no other intention than to set
" from the necessity of silence, and give
" opportunity of mingling on equal term
" polite assembly, from which, however
" he could not then escape, by a kind i
" tion of the only subject on which I
" him able to speak with propriety."

I am, &c.

GENER

№ 127. TUESDAY, JUNE 4, 1751.

Cœpisti melius quam desinis : ultima primis
Cedunt : dissimiles hic vir, et ille puer.

OVID.

Succeeding years thy early fame destroy ;
Thou, who began'st a man, wilt end a boy.

POLITIAN, a name eminent among the restorers of polite literature, when he published a collection of epigrams, prefixed to many of them the year of his age at which they were composed. He might design by this information, either to boast the early maturity of his genius, or to conciliate indulgence to the puerility of his performances. But whatever was his intent, it is remarked by Scaliger, that he very little promoted his own reputation, because he fell below the promise which his first productions had given, and in the latter part of his life seldom equalled the sallies of his youth.

It is not uncommon for those who at their first entrance into the world were distinguished for attainments or abilities, to disappoint the hopes which they had raised ; and to end in neglect and obscurity that life which they began in celebrity and honour. To the long catalogue of the inconveniencies of old age, which moral and satirical writers have so copiously displayed, may be often added *the loss of fame*.

The advance of the human mind toward
ject of laudable pursuit, may be compar
progress of a body driven by a blow.
for a time with great velocity and vigour
force of the first impulse is perpetually de
and though it should encounter no obsta
ble of quelling it by a sudden stop, the res
the medium through which it passes, and
inequalities of the smoothest surface, will
time by continued retardation wholly over
Some hindrances will be found in every
life, but he that fixes his eye upon any t
distance, necessarily loses sight of all tha
the intermediate space, and therefore set
with alacrity and confidence, nor suspect
sand obstacles by which he afterwards finc
sage embarrassed and obstructed. Some a
stopt at once in their career by a sudden
calamity, or diverted to a different dir
the cross impulse of some violent passion
the greater part languish by slow degree
at first into slight obliquities, and themselv
ly perceive at what time their ardour forso
or when they lost sight of their original

Weariness and negligence are perpet
vailing by silent encroachments, assiste
ferent causes, and not observed till the
without great difficulty, be opposed.
necessarily requires pauses of ease and re
and the deliciousness of ease commonly
unwilling to return to labour. We perh
vail upon ourselves to renew our atten
eagerly listen to every argument for frequ
positions of amusement; for when indol

once entered upon the mind, it can scarcely be dispossessed but by such efforts as very few are willing to exert.

It is the fate of industry to be equally endangered by miscarriage and success, by confidence and despondency. He that engages in a great undertaking with a false opinion of its facility, or too high conceptions of his own strength, is easily discouraged by the first hindrance of his advances, because he had promised himself an equal and perpetual progression without impediment or disturbance; when unexpected interruptions break in upon him, he is in the state of a man surprised by a tempest, where he purposed only to bask in the calm or sport in the shallows.

It is not only common to find the difficulty of an enterprize greater, but the profit less, than hope had pictured it. Youth enters the world with very happy prejudices in her own favour. She imagines herself not only certain of accomplishing every adventure, but of obtaining those rewards which the accomplishment may deserve. She is not easily persuaded to believe that the force of merit can be resisted by obstinacy and avarice, or its lustre darkened by envy and malignity. She has not yet learned that the most evident claims to praise or preferment may be rejected by malice against conviction, or by indolence without examination; that they may be sometimes defeated by artifices, and sometimes overborne by clamour; that in the mingled numbers of mankind, many need no other provocation to enmity than that they find themselves excelled: that others have ceased their curiosity, and consider every man

who fills the mouth of report with a new name, as an intruder upon their retreat, and a disturber of their repose; that some are engaged in complications of interest which they imagine endangered by every innovation; that many yield themselves up implicity to every report which hatred disseminates or folly scatters; and that whoever aspires to the notice of the publick, has in almost every man an enemy and a rival; and must struggle with the opposition of the daring, and elude the stratagems of the timorous, must quicken the frigid and soften the obdurate, must reclaim perverseness and inform stupidity.

It is no wonder that when the prospect of reward has vanished, the zeal of enterprize should cease; for who would persevere to cultivate the soil which he has, after long labour, discovered to be barren? He who hath pleased himself with anticipated praises; and expected that he should meet in every place with patronage or friendship, will soon remit his vigour, when he finds that from those who desire to be considered as his admirers nothing can be hoped but cold civility, and that many refuse to own his excellence, lest they should be too justly expected to reward it.

A man, thus cut off from the prospect of that port to which his address and fortitude had been employed to steer him, often abandons himself to chance and to the wind, and glides careless and idle down the current of life, without resolution to make another effort, till he is swallowed up by the gulph of mortality.

Others are betrayed to the same desertion of themselves by a contrary fallacy. It was said of

Hannibal that he wanted nothing to the completion of his martial virtues, but that when he had gained a victory he should know how to use it. The folly of desisting too soon from successful labours, and the haste of enjoying advantages before they are secured, is often fatal to men of impetuous desire, to men whose consciousness of uncommon powers fills them with presumption, and who having borne opposition down before them, and left emulation panting behind, are early persuaded to imagine that they have reached the heights of perfection, and that now, being no longer in danger from competitors, they may pass the rest of their days in the enjoyment of their acquisitions, in contemplation of their own superiority, and in attention to their own praises, and look unconcerned from their eminence upon the toils and contentions of meaner beings.

It is not sufficiently considered in the hour of exultation, that all human excellence is comparative; that no man performs much but in proportion to what others accomplish, or to the time and opportunities which have been allowed him; and that he who stops at any point of excellence is every day sinking in estimation, because his improvement grows continually more incommensurate to his life. Yet, as no man willingly quits opinions favourable to himself, they who have once been justly celebrated, imagine that they still have the same pretensions to regard, and seldom perceive the diminution of their character while there is time to recover it. Nothing then remains but murmurs and remorse; for if the spendthrift's

poverty be embittered by the reflection that he once was rich, how must the idler's obscurity be clouded by remembering that he once had lustre!

These errors all arise from an original mistake of the true motives of action. He that never extends his view beyond the praises or rewards of men, will be dejected by neglect and envy, or infatuated by honours and applause. But the consideration that life is only deposited in his hands to be employed in obedience to a master who will regard his endeavours, not his success, would have preserved him from trivial elations and discouragements, and enabled him to proceed with constancy and cheerfulness, neither enervated by commendation, nor intimidated by censure.

N° 128. SATURDAY, JUNE 9, 1751.

Αιων δ' ασφαλης
Ουκ εγενετ' ουδ' Αιακιδαι παρα Πηλει,
Ουτε παρ ανθρωποις
Καδμου λεγονται γε μαν βροτων
Ολβου υπερτατου οι
Σχειν.

For not the brave, or wise, or great,
E'er yet had happiness complete;
Nor Peleus, grandson of the sky,
Nor Cadmus scap'd the shafts of pain,
Though favour'd by the Pow'rs on high.
With every bliss that man can gain.

THE writers who have undertaken the task of reconciling mankind to their present state, and relieving the discontent produced by the various distribution of terrestrial advantages, frequently remind us that we judge too hastily of good and evil, that we view only the superficies of life, and determine of the whole by a very small part; and that in the condition of men it frequently happens, that grief and anxiety lie hid under the golden robes of prosperity, and the gloom of calamity is cheered by secret radiations of hope and comfort; as in the works of nature the bog is sometimes covered with flowers, and the mine concealed in the barren crags.

None but those who have learned the art of subjecting their senses as well as reason to hypothetical systems, can be persuaded by the most specious

rhetorician that the lots of life are equal; yet it cannot be denied that every one has peculiar pleasures and vexations, that external accidents operate variously upon different minds, and that no man can exactly judge from his own sensations, what another would feel in the same circumstances.

If the general disposition of things be estimated by the representation which every one makes of his own state, the world must be considered as the abode of sorrow and misery; for how few can forbear to relate their troubles and their distresses? If we judge by the account which may be obtained of every man's fortune from others, it may be concluded, that we are all placed in an elysian region overspread with the luxuriance of plenty, and fanned by the breezes of felicity; since scarcely any complaint is uttered without censure from those that hear it, and almost all are allowed to have obtained a provision at least adequate to their virtue or their understanding, to possess either more than they deserve or more than they enjoy.

We are either born with such dissimilitude of temper and inclination, or receive so many of our ideas and opinions from the state of life in which we are engaged, that the griefs and cares of one part of mankind seem to the other hypocrisy, folly, and affectation. Every class of society has its cant of lamentation, which is understood or regarded by none but themselves; and every part of life has its uneasinesses, which those who do not feel them will not commiserate. An event which spreads distraction over half the commerical world, *assembles* the trading companies in councils and

committees, and shakes the nerves of a thousand stockjobbers, is read by the landlord and the farmer with frigid indifference. An affair of love, which fills the young breast with incessant alternations of hope and fear, and steals away the night and day from every other pleasure or employment, is regarded by them whose passions time has extinguished as an amusement which can properly raise neither joy nor sorrow, and though it may be suffered to fill the vacuity of an idle moment, should always give way to prudence or interest.

He that never had any other desire than to fill a chest with money, or to add another manour to his estate, who never grieved but at a bad mortgage, or entered a company but to make a bargain, would be astonished to hear of beings known among the polite and gay by the denomination of wits. How would he gape with curiosity, or grin with contempt, at the mention of beings who have no wish but to speak what was never spoken before; who, if they happen to inherit wealth, often exhaust their patrimonies in treating those who will hear them talk; and if they are poor, neglect opportunities of improving their fortunes for the pleasure of making others laugh? How slowly would he believe that there are men who would rather lose a legacy than the reputation of a distich, who think it less disgrace to want money than repartee; whom the vexation of having been foiled in a contest of raillery is sometimes sufficient to deprive of sleep; and who would esteem it a lighter evil to miss a profitable bargain by some accidental delay, than not to have thought of a smart reply *till the time of* producing it was past? How little

would he suspect that this child of idleness and frolick enters every assembly with a beating bosom, like a litigant on the day of decision, and resolves the probability of applause with the anxiety of a conspirator, whose fate depends upon the next night; and at the hour of retirement he carries home, under a show of airy negligence, a heart lacerated with envy, or depressed with disappointment; and immures himself in his closet, that he may disencumber his memory at leisure, review the progress of the day, state with accuracy his loss or gain of reputation, and examine the causes of his failure or success.

Yet more remote from common conceptions are the numerous and restless anxieties by which female happiness is particularly disturbed. A solitary philosopher would imagine ladies born with an exemption from care and sorrow, lulled in perpetual quiet, and feasted with unmingled pleasure; for what can interrupt the content of those, upon whom one age has laboured after another to confer honours and accumulate immunities; those to whom rudeness is infamy, and insult is cowardice; whose eye commands the brave, and whose smiles soften the severe; whom the sailor travels to adorn, the soldier bleeds to defend, and the poet wears out life to celebrate; who claim tribute from every art and science, and for whom all who approach them endeavour to multiply delights, without requiring from them any return but willingness to be pleased?

Surely, among the favourites of nature, thus unacquainted with toil and danger, felicity must *have* fixed her residence; they must know only

the changes of more vivid or more gentle joys; their life must always move either to the slow or sprightly melody of the lyre of gladness; they can never assemble but to pleasure, or retire but to peace.

Such would be the thoughts of every man who should hover at a distance round the world, and know it only by conjecture and speculation. But experience will soon discover how easily those are disgusted who have been made nice by plenty, and tender by indulgence. He will soon see to how many dangers power is exposed which has no other guard than youth and beauty, and how easily that tranquillity is molested which can only be smoothed with the songs of flattery. It is impossible to supply wants as fast as an idle imagination may be able to form them, or to remove all inconveniences by which elegance refined into impatience may be offended. None are so hard to please, as those whom satiety of pleasure makes weary of themselves; nor any so readily provoked, as those who have been always courted with an emulation of civility.

There are indeed some strokes which the envy of fate aims immediately at the fair. The mistress of Catullus wept for her sparrow many centuries ago, and lapdogs will be sometimes sick in the present age. The most fashionable brocade is subject to stains; a pinner, the pride of Brussels, may be torn by a careless washer; a picture may drop from a watch; or the triumph of a new suit may be interrupted on the first day of its enjoyment, and all distinctions of dress unexpectedly obliterated by a general mourning.

Such is the state of every age, every sex an every condition: all have their cares, either fro nature or from folly: and whoever therefore find himself inclined to envy another, should remembe that he knows not the real condition which h desires to obtain, but is certain that by indulgin a vicious passion, he must lessen that happines which he thinks already too sparingly bestowed.

N° 129. TUESDAY, JUNE 11, 1751.

——Nunc, o nunc, Dædale, dixit.
Materiam, qua sis ingeniosus, habes.
Possidet et terras, et possidet æquora Minos:
Nec tellus nostræ, nec patet unda fugæ.
Restat iter cœlo: tentabimus ire.
Da veniam cœpto, Jupiter alte, meo.

OVID.

Now Dædalus, behold, by fate assign'd,
A task proportion'd to thy mighty mind!
Unconquer'd bars on earth and sea withstand:
Thine, Minos, is the main, and thine the land.
The skies are open——let us try the skies.
Forgive, great Jove, the daring enterprize.

MORALISTS, like other writers, instead o casting their eyes abroad in the living world and endeavouring to form maxims of practic and new hints of theory, content their curiosit *with the* secondary knowledge which book

afford, and think themselves entitled to reverence by a new arrangement of an ancient system, or new illustration of established principles. The sage precepts of the first instructors of the world are transmitted from age to age with little variation, and echoed from one author to another, not perhaps without some loss of their original force at every repercussion.

I know not whether any other reason than this idleness of imitation can be assigned for that uniform and constant partiality, by which some vices have hitherto escaped censure, and some virtues wanted recommendation; nor can I discover why else we have been warned only against part of our enemies, while the rest have been suffered to steal upon us without notice; why the heart has on one side been doubly fortified, and laid open on the other to the incursions of error and the ravages of vice.

Among the favourite topicks of moral declamation, may be numbered the miscarriages of imprudent boldness, and the folly of attempts beyond our power. Every page of every philosopher is crowded with examples of temerity that sunk under burdens which she laid upon herself, and called out enemies to battle by whom she was destroyed.

Their remarks are too just to be disputed, and too salutary to be rejected; but there is likewise some danger lest timorous prudence should be inculcated, till courage and enterprize are wholly repressed, and the mind congealed in perpetual inactivity by the fatal influence of frigorifick wisdom.

Every man should, indeed, carefully compare his force with his undertaking; for though we ought not to live only for our own sakes, and though therefore danger or difficulty should not be avoided merely because we may expose ourselves to misery or disgrace; yet it may be justly required of us, not to throw away our lives upon inadequate and hopeless designs, since we might, by a just estimate of our abilities, become more useful to mankind.

There is an irrational contempt of danger which approaches nearly to the folly, if not the guilt, of suicide; there is a ridiculous perseverance in impracticable schemes, which is justly punished with ignominy and reproach. But in the wide regions of probability, which are the proper province of prudence and election, there is always room to deviate on either side of rectitude without rushing against apparent absurdity; and according to the inclinations of nature, or the impressions of precept, the daring and the cautious may move in different directions without touching upon rashness or cowardice.

That there is a middle path which it is every man's duty to find, and to keep, is unanimously confessed: but it is likewise acknowledged that this middle path is so narrow, that it cannot easily be discovered, and so little beaten, that there are no certain marks by which it can be followed; the care therefore of all those who conduct others has been, that whenever they decline into obliquities, they should tend towards the side of safety.

It can, indeed, raise no wonder that temerity has *been generally* censured; for it is one of the vices

with which few can be charged, and which therefore great numbers are ready to condemn. It is the voice of noble and generous minds, the exuberance of magnanimity, and the ebulition of genius; and is therefore not regarded with much tenderness, because it never flatters us by that appearance of softness and imbecility, which is commonly necessary to concilate compassion. But if the same attention had been applied to the search of arguments against the folly of presupposing impossibilities, and anticipating frustration, I know not whether many would not have been roused to usefulness, who, having been taught to confound prudence with timidity, never ventured to excel, lest they should unfortunately fail.

It is necessary to distinguish our own interest from that of others, and that distinction will perhaps assist us in fixing the just limits of caution and adventurousness. In an undertaking that involves the happiness or the safety of many, we have certainly no right to hazard more than is allowed by those who partake the danger: but where only ourselves can suffer by miscarriage, we are not confined within such narrow limits; and still less is the reproach of temerity, when numbers will receive advantage by success, and only one be incommoded by failure.

Men are generally willing to hear precepts by which ease is favoured; and as no resentment is raised by general representations of human folly, even in those who are most eminently jealous of comparative reputation, we confess, without reluctance, that vain man is ignorant of his own weakness, and therefore frequently presumes to

attempt what he can never accomplish; but it ought likewise to be remembered, that man is no less ignorant of his own powers, and might perhaps have accomplished a thousand designs, which the prejudices of cowardice restrained him from attempting.

It is observed in the golden verses of Pythagoras, that power is never far from necessity. The vigour of the human mind quickly appears, when there is no longer any place for doubt and hesitation, when diffidence is absorbed in the sense of danger, or overwhelmed by some restless passion. We then soon discover, that difficulty is, for the most part, the daughter of idleness, that the obstacles with which our way seemed to be obstructed were only phantoms, which we believed real, because we durst not advance to a close examination; and we learn that it is impossible to determine without experience how much constancy may endure, or perseverance perform.

But whatever pleasure may be found in the review of distresses when art or courage has surmounted them, few will be persuaded to wish that they may be awakened by want or error to the conviction of their own abilities. Every one should therefore endeavour to invigorate himself by reason and reflection, and determine to exert the latent force that nature may have reposited in him, before the hour of exigence comes upon him, and compulsion shall torture him to diligence. It is below the dignity of a reasonable being to owe that strength to necessity which ought always to act at the call of choice, or to need any other

motive to industry than the desire of performing his duty.

Reflections that may drive away despair, cannot be wanting to him who considers how much life is now advanced beyond the state of naked, undisciplined, uninstructed nature. Whatever has been effected for convenience or elegance, while it was yet unknown, was believed impossible; and therefore would never have been attempted, had not some, more daring than the rest, adventured to bid defiance to prejudice and censure. Nor is there yet any reason to doubt that the same labour would be rewarded with the same success. There are qualities in the products of nature yet undiscovered, and combinations in the powers of art yet untried. It is the duty of every man to endeavour that something may be added by his industry to the hereditary aggregate of knowledge and happiness. To add much can indeed be the lot of few, but to add something, however little, every one may hope; and of every honest endeavour, it is certain that, however unsuccessful, it will be at last rewarded.

N° 130. SATURDAY, JUNE 15, 1751.

Non sic prata nova vere decentia.
Æstatis calidæ dispoliat vapor,
Sævit solstitio cum medius dies;——
Ut fulgor teneris qui radiat genis
Mamento rapitur, nullaque non dies
Formosi spolium corporis abstulit.
Res est forma fugax. Quis sapiens bono
Confidat fragili?

SENECA.

Not faster in the summer's ray
The spring's frail beauty fades away,
Than anguish and decay consume
The smiling virgin's rosy bloom.
Some beauty's snatch'd each day, each hour;
For beauty is a fleeting flow'r:
Then how can wisdom e'er confide
In beauty's momentary pride?

ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

You have very lately observed, that in the numerous subdivisions of the world, every class and order of mankind have joys and sorrows of their own; we all feel hourly pain and pleasure from events which pass unheeded before other eyes, but can scarcely communicate our perceptions to minds preoccupied by different objects, any more than the delight of well-disposed colours or harmonious sounds can be imparted to such as want the sense of hearing or of sight.

I am so strongly convinced of the justness of this remark, and have on so many occasions discovered with how little attention pride looks upon calamity of which she thinks herself not in danger, and indolence listens to complaint when it is not echoed by her own remembrance, that though I am about to lay the occurrences of my life before you, I question whether you will condescend to peruse my narrative, or without the help of some female speculatist be able to understand it.

I was born a beauty. From the dawn of reason I had my regard turned wholly upon myself, nor can recollect any thing earlier than praise and admiration. My mother, whose face had luckily advanced her to a condition above her birth, thought no evil so great as deformity. She had not the power of imagining any other defect than a cloudy complexion, or disproportinate features; and therefore contemplated me as an assemblage of all that could raise envy or desire, and predicted with triumphant fondness the extent of my conquests and the number of my slaves.

She never mentioned any of my young acquaintance before me, but to remark how much they fell below my perfection; how one would have had a fine face, but that her eyes were without lustre; how another struck the sight at a distance, but wanted my hair and teeth at a nearer view; another disgraced an elegant shape with a brown skin; some had short fingers, and others dimples in a wrong place.

As she expected no happiness nor advantage but from beauty, she thought nothing but beauty worthy of her care; and her maternal kindness

was chiefly exercised in contrivances to protect me from any accident that might deface me with a scar, or stain me with a freckle; she never thought me sufficiently shaded from the sun, or screened from the fire. She was severe or indulgent with no other intention than the preservation of my form; she excused me from work, lest I should learn to hang down my head, or harden my finger with a needle; she snatched away my book, because a young lady in the neighbourhood had made her eyes red with reading by a candle; but she would scarcely suffer me to eat, lest I should spoil my shape, nor to walk lest I should swell my ancle with a sprain. At night I was accurately surveyed from head to foot, lest I should have suffered any diminution of my charms in the adventures of the day; and was never permitted to sleep, till I had passed through the cosmetick discipline, part of which was a regular lustration performed with bean-flower water and May-dews: my hair was perfumed with variety of unguents, by some of which it was to be thickened, and by others to be curled. The softness of my hands was secured by medicated gloves, and my bosom rubbed with a pomade prepared by my mother, of virtue to discuss pimples and clear discolorations.

I was always called up early, because the morning air gives a freshness to the cheeks; but I was placed behind a curtain in my mother's chamber, because the neck is easily tanned by the rising sun. I was then dressed with a thousand precautions, and again heard my own praises, and triumphed in the compliments and prognostications of all that *approached me.*

My mother was not so much prepossessed with opinion of my natural excellencies as not to nk some cultivation necessary to their comple- n. She took care that I should want none of accomplishments included in female education, considered necessary in fashionable life. I was ked upon in my ninth year as the chief orna- nt of the dancing-master's ball, and Mr Ariet d to reproach his other scholars with my perfor- nces on the harpsichord. At twelve I was re- rkable for playing my cards with great elegance manner and accuracy of judgment.

At last the time came when my mother thought perfect in my exercises, and qualified to display he open world those accomplishments which had only been discovered in select parties or domes- k assemblies. Preparations were therefore made my appearance on a publick night, which she sidered as the most important and critical mo- nt of my life. She cannot be charged with ne- cting any means of recommendation, or leaving r thing to chance which prudence could ascer- n. Every ornament was tried in every position, ry friend was consulted about the colour of my ss, and the mantua-makers were harassed with ections and alterations.

At last the night arrived from which my future was to be reckoned. I was dressed and sent to conquer, with a heart beating like that of old knight-errant at his first sally. Scholars e told me of a Spartan matron, who, when she ed her son for battle, bade him bring back his eld, or be brought upon it. My venerable ent *dismissed* me to a field, in her opinion of

equal glory, with a command to shew that I was her daughter, and not to return without a lover.

I went, and was received like other pleasing novelties, with a tumult of applause. Every man who valued himself upon the graces of his person, or the elegance of his address, crowded about me, and wit and splendour contended for my notice. I was delightfully fatigued with incessant civilities, which were made more pleasing by the apparent envy of those whom my presence exposed to neglect, and returned with an intendant equal in rank and wealth to my utmost wishes; and from this time stood in the first rank of beauty, was followed by the gazers in the Mall, celebrated in the papers of the day, imitated by all who endeavoured to rise into fashion, and censured by those whom age or disappointment forced to retire.

My mother, who pleased herself with the hopes of seeing my exaltation, dressed me with all the exuberance of finery; and when I represented to her that a fortune might be expected proportionate to my appearance, told me, that she should scorn the reptile who could inquire after the fortune of a girl like me. She advised me to prosecute my victories, and time would certainly bring me a captive who might deserve the honour of being enchained for ever.

My lovers were indeed so numerous, that I had no other care than that of determining to whom I should seem to give the preference. But having been steadily and industriously instructed to preserve my heart from any impressions which might hinder me from consulting my interest, I acted with less em*barrassment*, because my choice was regulated by

principles more clear and certain than the caprice of approbation. When I had singled out one from the rest as more worthy of encouragement, I proceeded in my measures by the rules of art; and yet, when the ardour of the first visits was spent, generally found a sudden declension of my influence; I felt in myself the want of some power to diversify amusement and enliven conversation, and could not but suspect that my mind failed in performing the promises of my face. This opinion was soon confirmed by one of my lovers, who married Lavinia with less beauty and fortune than mine, because he thought a wife ought to have qualities which might make her amiable when her bloom was past.

The vanity of my mother would not suffer her to discover any defect in one that had been formed by her instructions, and had all the excellence which she herself could boast. She told me that nothing so much hindered the advancement of women as literature and wit, which generally frightened away those that could make the best settlements, and drew about them a needy tribe of poets and philosophers, that filled their heads with wild notions of content, and contemplation, and virtuous obscurity. She therefore enjoined me to improve my minuet step with a new French dancing-master, and wait the event of the next birth-night.

I had now almost completed my nineteenth year; if my charms had lost any of their softness, it was more than compensated by additional dignity; and if the attractions of innocence were impaired, their place was supplied by the arts of allurement. I was therefore preparing for a new

attack, without any abatement of my confidence, when, in the midst of my hopes and schemes, I was seized by that dreadful malady which has so often put a sudden end to the tyranny of beauty. I recovered my health after a long confinement; but when I looked again on that face which had been often flushed with transport at its own reflexion, and saw all that I had learned to value, all that I had endeavoured to improve, all that had procured me honours or praises, irrecoverably destroyed, I sunk at once into melancholy and despondence. My pain was not much consoled or alleviated by my mother, who grieved that I had not lost my life together with my beauty; and declared that she thought a young woman divested of her charms, had nothing for which those who loved her could desire to save her from the grave.

Having thus continued my relation to the period from which my life took a new course, I shall conclude it in another letter, if, by publishing this, you shew any regard for the correspondence of,

SIR, &c.

VICTORIA.

N° 131. TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 1751.

———*Fatis accede deisque,*
Et cole felices; miseros fuge. Sidera cœlo
Ut distant, flamma mari, sic utile recto.

LUCAN.

Still follow where auspicious fates invite;
Caress the happy, and the wretched slight.
Sooner shall jarring elements unite,
Than truth with gain, than interest with right.

F. LEWIS.

THERE is scarcely any sentiment in which, amidst the innumerable varieties of inclination that nature or accident have scattered in the world, we find greater numbers concurring than in the wish for riches, a wish indeed so prevalent, that it may be considered as universal and transcendental, as the desire in which all other desires are included, and of which the various purposes which actuate mankind are only subordinate species and different modifications.

Wealth is the general centre of inclination, the point to which all minds preserve an invariable tendency, from which they afterwards diverge in numberless directions. Whatever is the remote or ultimate design, the immediate care is to be rich; and in whatever enjoyment we intend finally to acquiesce, we seldom consider it as attainable but by the means of money. Of wealth therefore all unanimously confess the value, nor is there any disagreement but about the use.

No desire can be formed which riches do not assist to gratify. He that places his happiness in splendid equipage or numerous dependants, in refined praise or popular acclamations, in the accumulation of curiosities or the revels of luxury, in splendid edifices or wide plantations, must still, either by birth or acquisition, possess riches. They may be considered as the elemental principles of pleasure, which may be combined with endless diversity; as the essential and necessary substance, of which only the form is left to be adjusted by choice.

The necessity of riches being thus apparent, it is not wonderful that almost every mind has been employed in endeavours to acquire them; that multitudes have vied in arts by which life is furnished with accommodations, and which therefore mankind may reasonably be expected to reward.

It had indeed been happy, if this predominant appetite had operated only in concurrence with virtue, by influencing none but those who were zealous to deserve what they were eager to possess, and had abilities to improve their own fortunes by contributing to the ease or happiness of others. To have riches and to have merit would then have been the same, and success might reasonably have been considered as a proof of excellence.

But we do not find that any of the wishes of men keep a stated proportion to their powers of attainment. Many envy and desire wealth, who can never procure it by honest industry or useful knowledge. They therefore turn their eyes about to examine what other methods can be found of gaining that which none, however impotent or *worthless*, will be content to want.

A little inquiry will discover, that there are nearer ways to profit than through the intricacies of art, or up the steeps of labour; what wisdom and virtue scarcely receive at the close of life, as the recompence of long toil and repeated efforts, is brought within the reach of subtilty and dishonesty by more expeditious and compendious measures; the wealth of credulity is an open prey to faleshood; and the possessions of ignorance and imbecility are easily stolen away by the conveyances of secret artifice, or seized by the gripe of unresisted violence.

It is likewise not hard to discover, that riches always procure protection for themselves, that they dazzle the eyes of inquiry, divert the celerity of pursuit, or appease the ferocity of vengeance. When any man is incontestably known to have large possessions, very few think it requisite to inquire by what practices they were obtained; the resentment of mankind rages only against the struggles of feeble and timorous corruption, but when it has surmounted the first opposition, it is afterwards supported by favour and animated by applause.

The prospect of gaining speedily what is ardently desired, and the certainty of obtaining by every accession of advantage an addition of security, have so far prevailed upon the passions of mankind, that the peace of life is destroyed by a general and incessant struggle for riches. It is observed of gold by an old epigrammatist, that "to have it is to be in fear, and to want it is to be in sorrow." There is no condition which is not disquieted either with the care of gaining or of keeping money; and

the race of man may be divided in a political estimate between those who are practising fraud, and those who are repelling it.

If we consider the present state of the world, it will be found, that all confidence is lost among mankind, that no man ventures to act, where money can be endangered, upon the faith of another. It is impossible to see the long scrolls in which every contract is included, with all their appendages of seals and attestation, without wondering at the depravity of those beings, who must be restrained from violation of promise by such formal and publick evidences, and precluded from equivocation and subterfuge by such punctilious minuteness. Among all the satires to which folly and wickedness have given occasion, none is equally severe with a bond or a settlement.

Of the various arts by which riches may be obtained, the greater part are at the first view irreconcileable with the laws of virtue; some are openly flagitious, and practised not only in neglect, but in defiance of faith and justice; and the rest are on every side so entangled with dubious tendencies, and so beset with perpetual temptations, that very few, even of those who are yet not abandoned, are able to preserve their innocence or can produce any other claim to pardon than that they have deviated from the right less than others, and have sooner and more diligently endeavoured to return.

One of the chief characteristicks of the golden age, of the age in which neither care nor danger *had intruded* on mankind, is the community of possessions: strife and fraud were totally excluded

and every turbulent passion was stilled by plenty and equality. Such were indeed happy times, but such times can return no more. Cummunity of possession must include spontaniety of production, for what is obtained by labour will be of right the property of him by whose labour it is gained. And while a rightful claim to pleasure or to affluence must be procured either by slow industry or uncertain hazard, there will always be multitudes whom cowardice or impatience incite to more safe and more speedy methods, who strive to pluck the fruit without cultivating the tree, and to share the advantages of victory without partaking the danger of the battle.

In later ages, the conviction of the danger to which virtue is exposed while the mind continues open to the influence of riches, has determined many to a vow of perpetual poverty; they have suppressed desire by cutting off the possibility of gratification, and secured their peace by destroying the enemy whom they had no hope of reducing to quiet subjection. But by debarring themselves from evil, they have rescinded many opportunities of good; they have too often sunk into inactivity and uselessness; and though they have forborne to injure society, have not fully paid their contributions to its happinees.

While riches are so necessary to present convenience, and so much more easily obtained by crimes than virtues, the mind can only be secured from yielding to the continual impulse of covetousness by the predonderation of unchangeable and eternal motives. Gold will turn the intellectual balance, when *weighed only* against reputation; but will

be light and ineffectual when the opposite scale is charged with justice, veracity, and piety.

N° 132. SATURDAY, JUNE 22, 1751.

——Dociles imitandis
Turpibus ac pravis omnes sumus.

JUV.

The mind of mortals, in perverseness strong,
Imbibes with dire docility the wrong.

TO THE RAMBLER.

MR RAMBLER,

I WAS bred a scholar, and after the usual course of education, found it necessary to employ for the support of life that learning which I had almost exhausted my little fortune in acquiring. The lucrative profession drew my regard with equal attractions: each presented ideas which excited my curiosity, and each imposed duties which terrified my apprehension.

There is no temper more unpropitious to interest than desultory application and unlimited inquiry, by which the desires are held in a perpetual equipoise, and the mind fluctuates between different purposes without determination. I had books of every kind round me, among which I divided my *time as caprice* or accident directed. I often spent

the first hours of the day, in considering to what study I should devote the rest; and at last snatched up an author that lay upon the table, or perhaps fled to the coffee-house for deliverance from the anxiety of irresolution, and the gloominess of solitude.

Thus my little patrimony grew imperceptibly less, till I was roused from my literary slumber by a creditor, whose importunity obliged me to pacify him with so large a sum that what remained was not sufficient to support me more than eight months. I hope you will not reproach me with avarice or cowardice, if I acknowledge that I now thought myself in danger of distress, and obliged to endeavour after some certain competence.

There have been heroes of negligence, who have laid the price of their last acre in a drawer, and without the least interruption of their tranquillity or abatement of their expences, taken out one piece after another, till there were no more remaining. But I was not born to such dignity of imprudence or such exaltation above the cares and necessities of life: I therefore immediately engaged my friends to procure me a little employment, which might set me free from the dread of poverty, and afford me time to plan out some final scheme of lasting advantage.

My friends were struck with honest solicitude, and immediately promised their endeavours for my extrication. They did not suffer their kindness to languish by delay, but prosecuted their inquiries with such success, that in less than a month I was

perplexed with variety of offers and contrariety of prospects.

I had however no time for long pauses of consideration; and therefore soon resolved to accept the office of instructing a young nobleman in the house of his father: I went to the seat at which the family then happened to reside, was received with great politeness, and invited to enter immediately on my charge. The terms offered were such as I should willingly have accepted, though my fortune had allowed me greater liberty of choice: the respect with which I was treated flattered my vanity; and perhaps the splendour of the apartments and the luxury of the table, were not wholly without their influence. I immediately complied with the proposals, and received the young lord into my care.

Having no desire to gain more than I should truly deserve, I very diligently prosecuted my undertaking, and had the satisfaction of discovering in my pupil a flexible temper, a quick apprehension, and a retentive memory. I did not much doubt that my care would, in time, produce a wise and useful counsellor to the state, though my labours were somewhat obstructed by want of authority, and the necessity of complying with the freaks of negligence, and of waiting patiently for the lucky moment of voluntary attention. To a man whose imagination was filled with the dignity of knowledge, and to whom a studious life had made all the common amusements insipid and contemptible, it was not very easy to suppress his indignation, when he saw himself forsaken in the midst of his lecture, for an opportunity to catch an insect,

and found his instructions debarred from access to the intellectual faculties, by the memory of a childish frolick, or the desire of a new plaything.

These vexations would have recurred less frequently, had not his mamma, by entreating at one time that he should be excused from a task as a reward for some petty compliance, and withholding him from his book at another, to gratify herself or her visitants with his vivacity, shewn him that every thing was more pleasing and more important than knowledge, and that study was to be endured rather than chosen, and was only the business of those hours which pleasure left vacant, or discipline usurped.

I thought it my duty to complain, in tender terms, of these frequent avocations; but was answered, that rank and fortune might reasonably hope for some indulgence; that the retardation of my pupil's progress would not be imputed to any negligence or inability of mine; and that with the success which satisfied every body else, I might surely satisfy myself. I had now done my duty, and without more remonstrances continued to inculcate my precepts whenever they could be heard, gained every day new influence, and found that by degrees my scholar began to feel the quick impulses of curiosity, and the honest ardour of studious ambition.

At length it was resolved to pass a winter in London. The lady had too much fondness for her son to live five months without him, and too high an opinion of his wit and learning to refuse her vanity the gratification of exhibiting him

to the publick. I remonstrated against too early an acquaintance with cards and company; but with a soft contempt of my ignorance and pedantry, she said that he had been already confined too long to solitary study, and it was now time to shew him the world; nothing was more a brand of meanness than bashful timidity; gay freedom and elegant assurance were only to be gained by mixed conversation, a frequent conversation with strangers, and a timely introduction to splendid assemblies; and she had more than once observed, that his forwardness and complaisance began to desert him, and he was silent when he had not something of consequence to say, blushed whenever he happened to find himself mistaken, and hung down his head in the presence of the ladies without the readiness of reply and activity of officiousness remarkable in young gentlemen that were bred in London.

Again I found resistance hopeless, and again thought it proper to comply. We entered the coach, and in four days were placed in the gayest and most magnificent region of the town. My pupil, who had for several years lived at a remote seat, was immedately dazzled with a thousand beams of novelty and show. His imagination was filled with the perpetual tumult of pleasure that passed before him, and it was impossible to allure him from the window, or to overpower by any charm of eloquence the rattle of coaches, and the sounds which echoed from the doors of the neighbourhood. In three days his attention, which he began to regain, was disturbed by a rich suit in which he was equipped for the reception of company, and

which, having been long accustomed to a plain dress, he could not at first survey without ecstacy.

The arrival of the family was now formally notified; every hour of every day brought more intimate or more distant acquaintances to the door; and my pupil was indiscriminately introduced to all, that he might accustom himself to change of faces, and be rid with speed of his rustick diffidence. He soon endeared himself to his mother by the speedy acquisition or recovery of her darling qualities; his eyes sparkle at a numerous assembly, and his heart dances at the mention of a ball. He has at once caught the infection of high life, and has no other test of principles or actions than the quality of those to whom they are ascribed. He begins already to look down on me with superiority, and submits to one short lesson in a week, as an act of condescension rather than obedience; for he is of opinion, than no tutor is properly qualified who cannot speak French; and having formerly learned a few familiar phrases from his sister's governess, he is every day soliciting his mamma to procure him a foreign footman, that he may grow polite by his conversation. I am not yet insulted, but find myself likely to become soon a superfluous incumbrance, for my scholar has now no time for science, or for virtue: and the lady yesterday declared him so much the favourite of every company, that she was afraid he would not have an hour in the day to dance and fence.

I am &c.

EUMATHES.

N° 133. TUESDAY, JUNE 25, 1

Magna quidem sacris quæ dat præcepta libel
Victrix fortunæ sapientia. Dicimus autem
Hos quoque felices, qui ferre incommoda vitæ
Nec jactare jugum vita didicere magistra.

JU

Let Stoicks ethicks haughty rules advance
To combat fortune, and to conquer chance;
Yet happy those, though not so learn'd are th
Whom life instructs, who by experience taugh
For new to come from past misfortunes look,
Nor shake the yoke, which galls the more 'tis

CRE

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

You have shewn, by the publication
letter, that you think the life of Victo
wholly unworthy of the notice of a philos
I shall therefore continue my narrative, v
any apology for unimportance which yo
dignified, or for inaccuracies which you
correct.

When my life appeared to be no lo
danger, and as much of my strength was re
as enabled me to bear the agitation of a co
was placed at a lodging in a neighbouring vil

which my mother dismissed me with a faint embrace, having repeated her command not to expose my face too soon to the sun or wind, and told me, that with care I might perhaps become tolerable again. The prospect of being tolerable, had very little power to elevate the imagination of one who had so long been accustomed to praise and ecstacy; but it was some satisfaction to be separated from my mother, who was incessantly ringing the knell of departed beauty, and never entered my room without the whine of condolence or the growl of anger. She often wandered over my face, as travellers over the ruins of a celebrated city, to note every place which had once been remarkable for a happy feature. She condescended to visit my retirement, but always left me more melancholy; for after a thousand trifling inquiries about my diet and a minute examination of my looks, she generally concluded with a sigh, that I should never more be fit to be seen.

At last I was permitted to return home, but found no great improvement of my condition: for I was imprisoned in my chamber as a criminal, whose appearance would disgrace my friends, and condemned to be tortured into new beauty. Every experiment which the officiousness of folly could communicate, or the credulity of ignorance admit, was tried upon me. Sometimes I was covered with emollients, by which it was expected that all the scars would be filled, and my cheeks plumped up to their former smoothness; and sometimes I was punished with artificial excoriations, in hopes of gaining new graces with a new skin. The *cosmetick science* was exhausted upon me; but who

can repair the ruins of nature? My moth
forced to give me rest at last, and abandon
the fate of a fallen toast, whose fortune sh
sidered as a hopeless game, no longer wo
solicitude or attention.

The condition of a young woman who ha
thought or heard of any other excellence tha
ty, and whom the sudden blast of disease w
in her bloom, is indeed sufficiently cala
She is at once deprived of all that gave her en
or power; of all that elated her pride or ar
her activity; all that filled her days with pl
and her nights with hope; all that gave g
to the present hour, or brightened her prosp
futurity. It is perhaps not in the power of
whose attention has been divided by diversity
suits, and who has not been accustomed to
from others much of his happiness, to ima
himself such helpless destitution, such disr
nity. Every object of pleasing contemplati
once snatched away, and the soul finds every
tacle of ideas empty, or filled only with the
ry of joys that can return no more. All is
privation, or impotent desire; the facu
anticipation slumber in despondency, or the
of pleasure mutiny for employment.

I was so little able to find entertainment f
self, that I was forced in a short time to
abroad, as the solitary savage is driven by
from his cavern. I entered with all the h
of disgrace into assemblies, where I had
sparkled with gaiety, and towered with tr
I was not wholly without hope, that deject
misrepresented me to myself, and that the

of my former face might yet have some attraction and influence: But the first circle of visits convinced me, that my reign was at an end; that life and death were no longer in my hands; that I was no more to practise the glance of command or the frown of prohibition; to receive the tribute of sighs and praises, or be soothed with the gentle murmurs of amorous timidity. My opinion was now unheard, and my proposals were unregarded; the narrowness of my knowledge, and the meanness of my sentiments, were easily discovered when the eyes were no longer engaged against the judgment; and it was observed, by those who had formerly been charmed with my vivacious loquacity, that my understanding was impaired as well as my face, and that I was no longer qualified to fill a place in any company but a party at cards.

It is scarcely to be imagined how soon the mind sinks to a level with the condition. I, who had long considered all who approached me as vassals condemned to regulate their pleasures by my eyes, and harass their inventions for my entertainment, was in less than three weeks reduced to receive a ticket with professions of obligation; to catch with eagerness at a compliment; and to watch with all the anxiousness of dependance, lest any little civility that was paid me should pass unacknowledged.

Though the negligence of the men was not very pleasing when compared with vows and adoration, yet it was far more supportable than the insolence of my own sex. For the first ten months after my return into the world, I never entered a single house in which the memory of my downfal was not

revived. At one place I was congratulated on my escape with life; at another I heard of the benefits of early inoculation; by some I have been told in express terms, that I am not yet without my charms; others have whispered at my entrance, This is the celebrated beauty. One told me of a wash that would smooth the skin; and another offered me her chair that I might not front the light. Some soothed me with the observation that none can tell how soon my case may be her own; and some thought it proper to receive me with mournful tenderness, formal condolence, and consolatory blandishments.

Thus was I every day harassed with all the stratagems of well-bred malignity; yet insolence was more tolerable than solitude, and I therefore persisted to keep my time at the doors of my acquaintance, without gratifying them with any appearance of resentment or depression. I expected that their exultation would in time vapour away, that the joy of their superiority would end with its novelty; and that I should be suffered to glide along in my present form among the nameless multitude, whom nature never intended to excite envy or admiration, nor enabled to delight the eye or inflame the heart.

This was naturally to be expected, and this I began to experience. But when I was no longer agitated by the perpetual ardour of resistance and effort of perseverance, I found more sensibly the want of those entertainments which had formerly delighted me; the day rose upon me without an engagement, and the evening closed in its natural

gloom, without summoning me to a concert or a ball. None had any care to find amusements for me, and I had no power of amusing myself. Idleness exposed me to melancholy, and life began to languish in motionless indifference.

Misery and shame are nearly allied. It was not without many struggles that I prevailed on myself to confess my uneasiness to Euphemia, the only friend who had never pained me with comfort or with pity. I at last laid my calamities before her, rather to ease my heart than receive assistance. "We must distinguish," said she, "my Victoria, "those evils which are imposed by Providence, "from those to which we ourselves give the power "of hurting us. Of your calamity, a small part "is the infliction of Heaven, the rest is little more "than the corrosion of idle discontent. You "have lost that which may indeed sometimes con- "tribute to happiness, but to which happiness "is by no means inseparably annexed. You have "lost what the greater number of the human "race never have possessed; what those on whom "it is bestowed for the most part possess in "vain; and what you, while it was yours, knew "not how to use: You have only lost early what "the laws of nature forbid you to keep long, and "have lost it while your mind is yet flexible, and "while you have time to substitute more valuable "and more durable excellencies. Consider your- "self, my Victoria, as a being born to know, to "reason, and to act; rise at once from your dream "of melancholy to wisdom and to piety; you "will find that there are other charms than those

" of beauty, and other joys than the prai
" fools."

I am, Sir, &c.

VICTOR

N° 134. SATURDAY, JUNE 29, 17

Quis scit, an adjiciant hodiernæ crastina summ
Tempora Di superi!

HOR.

Who knows if Heav'n, with ever bounteous po
Shall add to-morrow to the present hour?

FRANCIS.

I SAT yesterday morning employed in del
ting on which, among the various subjects
occurred to my imagination, I should b
the paper of to-day. After a short effort
ditation, by which nothing was determi
grew every moment more irresolute, my
wandered from the first intention, and I
wished to think, than thought upon any
subject; till at last I was awakened fro
dream of study by a summons from the
the time was come for which I had been thu
ligently purposing to provide, and, howev
bious or sluggish, I was now necessitated to

Though to a writer whose design is so co
hensive and miscellaneous, that he may acc

date himself with a topick from every scene of life, or view of nature, it is no great aggravation of his task to be obliged to a sudden composition; yet I could not forbear to reproach myself for having so long neglected what was unavoidably to be done, and of which every moment's idleness increased the difficulty. There was, however, some pleasure in reflecting, that I, who had only trifled till diligence was necessary, might still congratulate myself upon my superiority to multitudes who have trifled till diligence is vain; who can by no degree of activity or resolution recover the opportunities which have slipped away; and who are condemned by their own carelessness to hopeless calamity and barren sorrow.

The folly of allowing ourselves to delay what we know cannot be finally escaped, is one of the general weaknesses, which, in spite of the instruction of moralists and the remonstrances of reason, prevail to a greater or less degree in every mind: even they who most steadily withstand it, find it, if not the most violent, the most pertinacious of their passions, always renewing its attacks, and though often vanquished, never destroyed.

It is indeed natural to have particular regard to the time present, and to be most solicitous for that which is by its nearness enabled to make the strongest impressions. When therefore any sharp pain is to be suffered, or any formidable danger to be incurred, we can scarcely exempt ourselves wholly from the seducements of imagination; we readily believe that another day will bring some support or advantage which we now want; and *are easily persuaded*, that the moment of neces-

sity which we desire never to arrive, is at a great distance from us.

Thus life is languished away in the gloom of anxiety, and consumed in collecting resolution which the next morning dissipates; in forming purposes which we scarcely hope to keep, and reconciling ourselves to our own cowardice by excuses, which, while we admit them, we know to be absurd. Our firmness is by the continual contemplation of misery hourly impaired; every submission to our fear enlarges its dominion; we not only waste that time in which the evil we dread might have been suffered and surmounted, but even where procrastination produces no absolute increase of our difficulties, make them less superable to ourselves by habitual terrors. When evils cannot be avoided, it is wise to contract the interval of expectation; to meet the mischiefs which will overtake us if we fly; and suffer only their real malignity without the conflicts of doubt and anguish of anticipation.

To act is far easier than to suffer; yet we every day see the progress of life retarded by the *vis inertiæ*, the mere repugnance to motion, and find multitudes repining at the want of that which nothing but idleness hinders them from enjoying. The case of Tantalus, in the region of poetick punishment, was somewhat to be pitied, because the fruits that hung about him retired from his hand; but what tenderness can be claimed by those who, though perhaps they suffer the pains of Tantalus, will never lift their hands for their own relief?

There is nothing more common among this

torpid generation than murmurs and complaints; murmurs at uneasiness which only vacancy and suspicion expose them to feel, and complaints of distresses which it is in their own power to remove. Laziness is commonly associated with timidity. Either fear originally prohibits endeavours by infusing despair of success, or the frequent failure of irresolute struggles, and the constant desire of avoiding labour, impress by degrees false terrors on the mind. But fear, whether natural or acquired, when once it has full possession of the fancy, never fails to employ it upon visions of calamity, such as, if they are not dissipated by useful employment, will soon overcast it with horrors, and imbitter life not only with those miseries by which all earthly beings are really more or less tormented, but with those which do not yet exist, and which can only be discerned by the perspicacity of cowardice.

Among all who sacrifice future advantage to present inclination, scarcely any gain so little as those that suffer themselves to freeze in idleness. Others are corrupted by some enjoyment of more or less power to gratify the passions; but to neglect our duties, merely to avoid the labour of performing them, a labour which is always punctually rewarded, is surely to sink under weak temptations. Idleness never can secure tranquillity; the call of reason and of conscience will pierce the closest pavilion of the sluggard, and though it may not have force to drive him from his down, will be loud enough to hinder him from sleep. Those moments which he cannot resolve to make useful by *devoting* them to the great business of

his being, will still be usurped by powers that will not leave them to his disposal; remorse and vexation will seize upon them, and forbid him to enjoy what he is so desirous to appropriate.

There are other causes of inactivity incident to more active faculties and more acute discernment. He to whom many objects of pursuit arise at the same time, will frequently hesitate between different desires, till a rival has precluded him, or change his course as new attractions prevail, and harass himself without advancing. He who sees different ways to the same end, will, unless he watches carefully over his own conduct, lay out too much of his attention upon the comparison of probabilities and the adjustment of expedients, and pause in the choice of his road, till some accident intercepts his journey. He whose penetration extends to remote consequences, and who, whenever he applies his attention to any design, discovers new prospects of advantage, and possibilities of improvement, will not easily be persuaded that his project is ripe for execution; but will superadd one contrivance to another, endeavour to unite various purposes in one operation, multiply complications, and refine niceties, till he is entangled in his own scheme, and bewildered in the perplexity of various intentions. He that resolves to unite all the beauties of situation in a new purchase, must waste his life in roving to no purpose from province to province. He that hopes in the same house to obtain every convenience, may draw plans and study Palladio, but will never lay a stone. He will attempt a treatise on some important subject, and amass materials, consult au-

thors, and study all the dependent and collateral parts of learning, but never conclude himself qualified to write. He that has abilities to conceive perfection, will not easily be content without it; and since perfection cannot be reached, will lose the opportunity of doing well in the vain hope of unattainable excellence.

The certainty that life cannot be long, and the probability that it will be much shorter than nature allows, ought to awaken every man to the active prosecution of whatever he is desirous to perform. It is true, that no diligence can ascertain success; death may intercept the swiftest career; but he who is cut off in the execution of an honest undertaking, has at least the honour of falling in his rank, and has fought the battle, though he missed the victory.

N° 135. TUESDAY, JULY 2, 1751.

Cœlum, non animum mutant.

HOR.

Place may be chang'd, but who can change his mind?

It is impossible to take a vew on any side, or observe any of the various classes that form the great community of the world, whithout discovering the influence of example, and admitting with new conviction the observation of Aristotle, that man is an imitative being. The greater, for

the greater number follow the track which others have beaten, without any curiosity after new discoveries, or ambition of trusting themselves to their own conduct. And, of those who break the ranks and disorder the uniformity of the march, most return in a short time from their deviation, and prefer the equal and steady satisfaction of security before the frolicks of caprice and the honours of adventure.

In questions difficult or dangerous, it is indeed natural to repose upon authority, and when fear happens to predominate, upon the authority of those whom we do not in general think wiser than ourselves. Very few have abilities requisite for the discovery of abstruse truth; and of those few some want leisure, and some resolution. But it is not so easy to find the reason of the universal submission to precedent where every man might safely judge for himself; where no irreparable loss can be hazarded, nor any mischief of long continuance incurred. Vanity might be expected to operate where the more powerful passions are not awakened; the mere pleasure of acknowledging no superior might produce slight singularities, or the hope of gaining some new degree of happiness awaken the mind to invention or experiment.

If in any case the shackles of prescription could be wholly shaken off, and the imagination left to act without controul, on what occasion should it be expected, but in the selection of lawful pleasure? Pleasure, of which the essence is choice; which compulsion dissociates from every thing to *which* nature has united it; and which owes not

ly its vigour but its being to the smiles of li-
ty. Yet we see that the senses, as well as the
son, are regulated by credulity; and that most
l feel, or say that they feel, the gratifications
ich others have taught them to expect.

At this time of universal migration, when al-
st every one, considerable enough to attract re-
rd, has retired, or is preparing with all the ear-
tness of distress to retire into the country;
ien nothing is to be heard but the hopes of
edy departure, or the complaints of involun-
y delay; I have often been tempted to inquire
at happiness is to be gained, or what inconve-
nce to be avoided, by this stated recession? Of
birds of passage, some follow the summer, and
ne the winter, because they live upon sustenance
ich only summer or winter can supply; but of
annual flight of human rovers it is much
rder to assign the reason, because they do not
pear either to find or seek any thing which is
t equally afforded by the town and country.

I believe that many of these fugitives may have
ard of men whose continual wish was for the
iet of retirement, who watched every opportu-
y to steal away from observation, to forsake the
owd, and delight themselves with *the society of*
itude. There is indeed scarcely any writer who
s not celebrated the happiness of rural privacy,
d delighted himself and his reader with the me-
ly of birds, the whisper of groves, and the
rmur of rivulets; nor any man eminent for ex-
it of capacity, or greatness of exploits, that has
t left behind him some memorials of lonely wis-
m and *silent dignity*.

But almost all absurdity of conduct arises from the imitation of those whom we cannot resemble. Those who thus testified their weariness of tumult and hurry, and hasted with so much eagerness to the leisure of retreat, were either men overwhelmed with the pressure of difficult employments, harassed with importunities, and distracted with multiplicity; or men wholly engrossed by speculative sciences, who, having no other end of life but to learn and teach, found their searches interrupted by the common commerce of civility, and their reasonings disjointed by frequent interruptions. Such men might reasonably fly to that ease and convenience which their condition allowed them to find only in the country. The statesman who devoted the greater part of his time to the publick, was desirous of keeping the remainder in his own power. The general ruffled with dangers, wearied with labours, and stunned with acclamations, gladly snatched an interval of silence and relaxation. The naturalist was unhappy where the works of Providence were not always before him. The reasoner could adjust his systems only where his mind was free from the intrusion of outward objects.

Such examples of solitude very few of those who are now hastening from the town have any pretensions to plead in their own justification, since they cannot either pretend weariness of labour, or desire of knowledge. They purpose nothing more than to quit one scene of idleness for another, and after having trifled in publick to sleep in secrecy. The utmost that they can hope to *gain is the* change of ridiculousness to obscurity,

nd the privilege of having fewer witnesses to a fe of folly. He who is not sufficiently important › be disturbed in his pursuits, but spends all his ours according to his own inclination, and has ıore hours than his mental faculties enable him › fill either with enjoyment or desires, can have othing to demand of shades and valleys. As ravery is said to be a panoply, insignificancy is lways a shelter.

There are however pleasures and advantages in rural situation, which are not confined to philo›phersand heroes. The freshness of the air, the ɛrdure of the woods, the paint of the meadows, nd the unexhausted variety which summer scat›rs upon the earth, may easily give delight to an nlearned spectator. It is not necessary that he ho looks with pleasure on the colours of a flower hould study the principles of vegetation, or that ıe Ptolemaick and Copernican system should be ompared before the light of the sun can gladden, r its warmth invigorate. Novelty is itself a ɔurce of gratification ; and Milton justly observes, ıat to him who has been long pent up in cities o rural object can be presented, which will not elight or refresh some of his senses.

Yet even these easy pleasures are missed by the reater part of those who waste their summer in he country. Should any man pursue his acquaintnces to their retreats, he would find few of them stening to Philomel, loitering in woods, or pluckıg daisies, catching the healthy gale of the mornıg, or watching the gentle coruscations of declinıg day. Some will be discovered at a window by he road side, rejoicing when a new cloud of dust

gathers towards them, as at the approach of a momentary supply of conversation, and a short relief from the tediousness of unideal vacancy.—Others are placed in the adjacent villages, where they look only upon houses as in the rest of the year, which no change of objects but what a remove to any new street in London might have given them. The same set of acquaintances still settle together, and the form of life is not otherwise diversified than by doing the same things in a different place. They pay and receive visits in the usual form, they frequent the walks in the morning, they deal cards at night, they attend to the same tattle, and dance with the same partners; nor can they at their return to their former habitation congratulate themselves on any other advantage, than that they have passed their time like others of the same rank; and have the same right to talk of the happiness and beauty of the country, of happiness which they never felt, and beauty which they never regarded.

To be able to procure its own entertainments, and to subsist upon its own stock, is not the prerogative of every mind. There are indeed understandings so fertile and comprehensive, that they can always feed reflection with new supplies, and suffer nothing from the preclusion of adventitious amusements; as some cities have within their own walls enclosed ground enough to feed their inhabitants in a siege. But others live only from day to day, and must be constantly enabled by foreign supplies, to keep out the encroachments of languor and stupidity. Such could not indeed be *blamed for* hovering within reach of their usual

, more than any other animal for not quit-
native element, were not their faculties con-
by their own fault. But let not those
into the country, merely because they
: be left alone at home, boast their love of
or their qualifications for solitude; nor
that they receive instantaneous infusions
m from the Dryads, and are able, when
ve smoke and noise behind, to act, or
r reason for themselves.

36. SATURDAY, JULY 6, 1751.

ς γαρ μοι κεινος ομως ωνδαο πυλησιν,
ὅστις μεν κευθει ενὶ φρεσιν, αλλο δε βαζει.
HOMER.

dares think one thing, and another tell,
heart detests him as the gates of hell.
POPE.

gard which they whose abilities are em-
in the works of imagination claim from
t of mankind, arises in a great measure
heir influence on futurity. Rank may
erred by princes, and wealth bequeathed
rs or by robbers; but the honours of a
ame, and the veneration of distant ages,
e sons of learning have the power of be-
. While therefore it continues one of the
eristicks of rational nature to decline obli-
thors never can be wholly overlooked in

the search after happiness, nor become contemptible but by their own fault.

The man who considers himself as constituted the ultimate judge of disputable characters, and entrusted with the distribution of the last terrestrial rewards of merit, ought to summon all his fortitude to the support of his integrity, and resolve to discharge an office of such dignity with the most vigilant caution and scrupulous justice. To deliver examples to posterity, and to regulate the opinion of future times, is no slight or trivial undertaking; nor is it easy to commit more atrocious treason against the great republick of humanity, than by falsifying its records and misguiding its decrees.

To scatter praise or blame without regard to justice, is to destroy the distinction of good and evil. Many have no other test of actions than general opinion; and all are so far influenced by a sense of reputation, that they are often restrained by fear of reproach, and excited by hope of honour, when other principles have lost their power; nor can any species of prostitution promote general depravity more than that which destroys the force of praise, by shewing that it may be acquired without deserving it, and which, by setting free the active and ambitious from the dread of infamy, lets loose the rapacity of power, and weakens the only authority by which greatness is controlled.

Praise, like gold and diamonds, owes its value only to its scarcity. It becomes cheap as it becomes vulgar, and will no longer raise expectation or animate enterprize. It is therefore not only *necessary*, that wickedness, even when it is not

safe to censure it, be denied applause, but that goodness be commended only in proportion to its degree; and that the garlands due to the great benefactors of mankind, be not suffered to fade upon the brow of him who can boast only petty services and easy virtues.

Had these maxims been universally received, how much would have been added to the task of dedication, the work on which all the power of modern wit has been exhausted. How few of these initial panegyricks had appeared, if the author had been obliged first to find a man of virtue, then to distinguish the distinct species and degree of his desert, and at last to pay him only the honours which he might justly claim. It is much easier to learn the name of the last man whom chance has exalted to wealth and power, to obtain by the intervention of some of his domesticks the privilege of addressing him, or in confidence of the general acceptance of flattery, to venture on an address without any previous solicitation; and after having heaped upon him all the virtues to which philosophy has assigned a name, inform him how much more might be truly said, did not the fear of giving pain to his modesty repress the raptures of wonder and the zeal of veneration.

Nothing has so much degraded literature from its natural rank, as the practice of indecent and promiscuous dedication; for what credit can he expect who professes himself the hireling of vanity, however profligate, and without shame or scruple celebrates the worthless, dignifies the mean, and gives to the corrupt, licentious, and oppresive, the ornaments which ought only to add grace to truth,

and loveliness to innocence? Every other kind of adulteration, however shameful, however mischievous, is less detestable than the crime of counterfeiting characters, and fixing the stamp of literary sanction upon the dross and refuse of the world.

Yet I would not overwhelm the authors with the whole load of infamy, of which part, perhaps the greater part, ought to fall upon their patrons. If he that hires a bravo partakes the guilt of murder, why should he who bribes a flatterer hope to be exempted from the shame of falshood? The unhappy dedicator is seldom without some motives which obstruct, though not destroy, the liberty of choice; he is oppressed by miseries which he hopes to relieve, or inflamed by ambition which he expects to gratify. But the patron has no incitements equally violent; he can receive only a short gratification, with which nothing but stupidity could dispose him to be pleased. The real satisfaction which praise can afford is by repeating aloud the whispers of conscience, and by shewing us that we have not endeavoured to deserve well in vain. Every other encomium is, to an intelligent mind, satire and reproach; the celebration of those virtues which we feel ourselves to want, can only impress a quicker sense of our own defects, and shew that we have not yet satisfied the expectations of the world, by forcing us to observe how much fiction must contribute to the completion of our character.

Yet sometimes the patron may claim indulgence; for it does not always happen, that the encomiast has been much encouraged to his attempt. Many a hapless author, when his book

and perhaps his dedication, was ready for the press, has waited long before any one would pay the price of prostitution, or consent to hear the praises destined to insure his name against the casualties of time: and many a complaint has been vented against the decline of learning, and neglect of genius, when either parsimonious prudence has declined expence, or honest indignation rejected falsehood. But if at last, after long inquiry and innumerable disappointments, he find a lord willing to hear of his own eloquence and taste, a statesman desirous of knowing how a friendly historian will represent his conduct, or a lady delighted to leave to the world some memorial of her wit and beauty, such weakness cannot be censured as an instance of enormous depravity. The wisest man may by a diligent solicitor be surprised in the hour of weakness, and persuaded to solace vexation, or invigorate hope, with the musick of flattery.

To censure all dedications as adulatory and servile, would discover rather envy than justice. Praise is the tribute of merit, and he that has incontestably distinguished himself by any publick performance, has a right to all the honours which the publick can bestow. To men thus raised above the rest of the community, there is no need that the book or its author should have any particular relation: that the patron is known to deserve respect, is sufficient to vindicate him that pays it. To the same regard from particular persons private virtue and less conspicuous excellence may be sometimes entitled. An author may with *great propriety inscribe* his work to him by whose

encouragement it was undertaken, or by whole liberality he has been enabled to prosecute it, and he may justly rejoice in his own fortitude that dares to rescue merit from obscurity.

Acribus exemplis videor te cludere : misce
Ergo aliquid nostris de moribus.——
Thus much I will indulge thee for thy ease,
And mingle something of our times to please.
DRYDEN *jun.*

I know not whether greater relaxation may not be indulged, and whether hope as well as gratitude may not unblameably produce a dedication, but let the writer who pours out his praises only to propitiate power, or attract the attention of greatness, be cautious lest his desire betray him to exuberant eulogies. We are naturally more apt to please ourselves with the future than the past, and while we luxuriate in expectation, may be easily persuaded to purchase what we yet rate only by imagination, at a higher price than experience will warrant.

But no private views of personal regard can discharge any man from his general obligations to virtue and to truth. It may happen in the various combinations of life, that a good man may receive favours from one, who notwithstanding his accidental beneficence, cannot be justly proposed to the imitation of others, and whom therefore he must find some other way of rewarding than by publick celebrations. Self-love has indeed many powers of seducement, but it surely ought not to exalt any individual to equality with the collective *body* of mankind, or persuade him that a benefit

conferred on him is equivalent to every other virtue. Yet many upon false principles of gratitude have ventured to extol wretches, whom all but their dependents numbered among the reproaches of the species, and whom they would likewise have beheld with the same scorn had they not been hired to dishonest approbation.

To encourage merit with praise is the great business of literature; but praise must lose its influence, by unjust or negligent distribution; and he that impairs its value may be charged with misapplications of the power that genius puts into his hands, and with squandering on guilt the recompence of virtue.

N° 137. TUESDAY, JULY 9, 1751.

Dum vitant stulti vitia, in contraria currunt.

HOR.

——Whilst fools one vice condemn,
They run into the opposite extreme.

CREECH.

WHAT wonder is the effect of ignorance, has been often observed. The awful stillness of attention, with which the mind is overspread at the first view of an unexpected effect, ceases when we have leisure to disentangle complications and investigate causes. Wonder is a pause of reason, a sudden cessation of the mental progress, which

lasts only while the understanding is fixed upon some single idea, and is at an end when it recovers force enough to divide the object into its parts, or mark the intermediate gradations from the first agent to the laat consequence.

It may be remarked with equal truth, that ignorance is often the effect of wonder. It is common for those who have never accustomed themselves to the labour of inquiry, nor invigorated their confidence by conquests over difficulty, to sleep in the gloomy quiescence of astonishment, without any effort to animate inquiry, or dispel obscurity. What they cannot immediately conceive, they consider as too high to be reached, or too extensive to be comprehended; they therefore content themselves with the gaze of folly, forbear to attempt what they have no hopes of performing, and resign the pleasure of rational contemplation to more pertinacious study or more active faculties.

Among the productions of mechanick art, many are of a form so different from that of their first materials, and many consist of parts so numerous and so nicely adapted to each other, that it is not possible to view them without amazement. But when we enter the shops of artificers, observe the various tools by which every operation is facilitated, and trace the progress of a manufacture through the different hands that in succession to each other contribute to its perfection, we soon discover that every single man has an easy task, and that the extremes however remote of natural rudeness and artificial elegance, are joined by regular concatenation of effects, of which every one is intro-

duced by that which precedes it, and equally introduces that which is to follow.

The same is the state of intellectual and manual performances. Long calculations or complex diagrams affright the timorous and unexperienced from a second view; but if we have skill sufficient to analyse them into simple principles, it will be discovered that our fear was groundless. *Divide and conquer*, is a principle equally just in science as in policy. Complication is a species of confederacy, which, while it continues united, bids defiance to the most active and vigorous intellect; but of which every member is separately weak, and which may therefore be quickly subdued if it can once be broken.

The chief art of learning, as Locke has observed, is to attempt but little at a time. The widest excursions of the mind are made by short flights frequently repeated; the most lofty fabricks of science are formed by the continued accumulation of single propositions.

It often happens, whatever be the cause, that impatience of labour, or dread of miscarriage, seizes those who are most distinguished for quickness of apprehension; and that they who might with the greatest reason promise themselves victory, are least willing to hazard the encounter. This diffidence, where the attention is not laid asleep by laziness or dissipated by pleasures, can arise only from confused and general views such as negligence snatches in haste, or from the disappointment of the first hopes formed by arrogance without *reflection*. To expect that the intricacies of science will be pierced by a careless glance

or the eminences of fame ascended without labour, is to expect a particular privilege, a power denied to the rest of mankind; but to suppose that the maze is inscrutable to diligence, or the heights inaccessble to perseverance, is to submit tamely to the tyranny of fancy, and enchain the mind in voluntary shackles.

It is the proper ambition of the heroes in literature to enlarge the boundaries of knowledge by discovering and conquering new regions of the intellectual world. To the success of such undertakings perhaps some degree of fortuitous happiness is necessary, which no man can promise or procure to himself; and therefore doubt and irresolution may be forgiven in him that ventures into the unexplored abysses of truth, and attempts to find his way through the fluctuations of uncertainty, and the conflicts of contradiction. But when nothing more is required, than to pursue a path already beaten, and to trample obstacles which others have demolished, why should any man so much distrust his own intellect as to imagine himself unequal to the attempt?

It were to be wished that they who devote their lives to study would at once believe nothing too great for their attainment, and consider nothing as too little for their regard; that they would extend their notice alike to science and to life, and unite some knowledge of the present world to their acquaintance with past ages and remote events.

Nothing has so much exposed men of learning to contempt and ridicule, as their ignorance of *things* which are known to all but themselves.

Those who have been taught to consider the institutions of the schools, as giving the last perfection to human abilities, are surprised to see men wrinkled with study, yet wanting to be instructed in the minute circumstances of propriety, or the necessary forms of daily transaction; and quickly shake off their reverence for modes of education, which they find to produce no ability above the rest of mankind.

Books, says Bacon, *can never teach the use of books*. The student must learn by commerce with mankind to reduce his speculations to practice, and accommodate his knowledge to the purposes of life.

It is too common for those who have been bred to scholastick professions, and passed much of their time in academies where nothing but learning confers honours, to disregard every other qualification, and to imagine that they shall find mankind ready to pay homage to their knowledge, and to crowd about them for instruction. They therefore step out from their cells into the open world, with all the confidence of authority and dignity of importance; they look round about them at once with ignorance and scorn on a race of beings to whom they are equally unknown and equally contemptible, but whose manners they must imitate, and with whose opinions they must comply, if they desire to pass their time happily among them.

To lessen that disdain with which scholars are inclined to look on the common business of the world, and the unwillingness with which they condescend to learn what is not to be found in any system *of philosophy*, it may be necessary to con-

sider, that though admiration is excited by abstruse researches and remote discoveries, yet pleasure is not given, nor affection conciliated but by softer accomplishments, and qualities more easily communicable to those about us. He that can only converse upon questions, about which only a small part of mankind has knowledge sufficient to make them curious, must lose his days in unsocial silence, and live in the crowd of life without a companion. He that can only be useful on great occasions, may die without exerting his abilities, and stand a helpless spectator of a thousand vexations which fret away happiness, and which nothing is required to remove but a little dexterity of conduct and readiness of expedients.

No degree of knowledge attainable by man is able to set him above the want of hourly assistance, or to extinguish the desire of fond endearments and tender officiousness; and therefore, no one should think it unnecessary to learn those arts by which friendship may be gained. Kindness is preserved by a constant reciprocation of benefits or interchange of pleasures; but such benefits only can be bestowed, as others are capable to receive, and such pleasure only imparted, as others are qualified to enjoy.

By this descent from the pinnacles of art no honour will be lost; for the condescensions of learning are always overpaid by gratitude. An elevated genius employed in little things, appears, to use the simile of Longinus, like the sun in his evening declination; he remits his splendour but retains his magnitude, and pleases more though he *dazzles less*.

N° 138. SATURDAY, JULY 13, 1751.

——Tecum libeat mihi sordida rura
Atque humiles habitare casas, et figere cervos.
VIRG.

With me retire, and leave the pomp of courts
For humble cottages and rural sports.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH the contempt with which you have treated the annual migrations of the gay and busy part of mankind, is justified by daily observation, since most of those who leave the town, neither vary their entertainments nor enlarge their notions; yet I suppose you do not intend to represent the the practice itself as ridiculous, or to declare that he whose condition puts the distribution of his time into his own power, may not properly divide it between the town and country.

That the country, and only the country, displays the inexhaustible varieties of nature, and supplies the philosophical mind with matter for admiration and inquiry, never was denied; but my curiosity is very little attracted by the colour of a flower, the anatomy of an insect, or the structure of a nest. I am generally employed upon human manners, and therefore generally fill up the months of rural leisure with remarks on those who live within the circle of my notice. If writers would more *frequently* visit those regions of neg-

ligence and liberty, they might diversify their representations, and multiply their images, for in the country are original characters chiefly to be found. In cities, and yet more in courts, the minute discriminations which distinguish one from another are for the most part effaced, the peculiarities of temper and opinion are gradually worn away by promiscuous converse, as angular bodies and uneven furfaces lose their points and asperities by frequent attrition against one another, and approach by degrees to uniform rotundity. The prevalence of fashion, the influence of example, the desire of applause, and the dread of censure, obstruct the natural tendencies of the mind, and check the fancy in its first efforts to break forth into experiments of caprice.

Few inclinations are so strong as to grow up into habits, when they must struggle with the constant opposition of settled forms and established customs. But in the country every man is a separate and independent being; solitude flatters irregularity with hopes of secrecy; and wealth, removed from the mortification of comparison and the awe of equality, swells into contemptuous confidence, and sets blame and laughter at defiance; the impulses of nature act unrestrained, and the disposition dares to shew itself in its true form, without any disguise of hypocrisy or decorations of elegance. Every one indulges the full enjoyment of his own choice, and talks and lives with no other view than to please himself, without inquiring how far he deviates from the general practice, or considering others as entitled to any account of his sentiments or actions. If he builds

or demolishes, opens or encloes, deluges or drains, it is not his care what may be the opinion of those who are skilled in perspective or architecture, it is sufficient that he has no landlord to control him, and that none has any right to examine in what project the lord of the manor spends his own money on his own grounds.

For this reason it is not very common to want subjects for rural conversation. Almost every man is daily doing something which produces merriment, wonder, or resentment, among his neighbours. This utter exemption from restraint leaves every anomalous quality to operate in its full extent, and suffers the natural character to diffuse itself to every part of life. The pride which, under the check of publick observation, would have been only vented among servants and domesticks, becomes in a country baronet the torment of a province, and instead of terminating in the destruction of China ware and glasses, ruins tenants, dispossesses cottagers, and harasses villages with actions of trespass and bills of indictment.

It frequently happens that even without violent passions, or enormous corruption, the freedom and laxity of a rustick life produces remarkable particularities of conduct or manner. In the province where I now reside, we have one lady eminent for wearing a gown always of the same cut and colour; another for shaking hands with those that visit her; and a third for unshaken resolution never to let tea or coffee enter her house.

But of all the female characters which this place affords, I have found none so worthy of attention as that of Mrs. Busy, a widow, who lost her

husband in her thirtieth year, and has since passed her time at the manor-house, in the government of her children, and the management of the estate.

Mrs. Busy was married at eighteen, from a boarding-school, where she had passed her time, like other young ladies, in needle-work, with a few intervals of dancing and reading. When she became a bride, she spent one winter with her husband in town, where, having no idea of any conversation beyond the formalities of a visit, she found nothing to engage her passions; and when she had been one night at court, and two at an opera, and seen the Monument, the Tombs, and the Tower, she concluded that London had nothing more to shew, and wondered that when women had once seen the world they could not be content to stay at home. She therefore went willingly to the ancient seat, and for some years studied housewifery under Mr. Busy's mother, with so much assiduity, that the old lady, when she died, bequeathed her a caudle-cup, a soup-dish, two beakers, and a chest of table linen spun by herself.

Mr. Busy finding the economical qualities of his lady, resigned his affairs wholly into her hands, and devoted his life to his pointers and his hounds. He never visited his estates but to destroy the partridges or foxes; and often committed such devastations in the rage of pleasure, that some of his tenants refused to hold their lands at the usual rent. Their landlady persuaded them to be satisfied, and entreated her husband to dismiss his dogs, with many exact calculations of the ale *drank by his* companions, and corn consumed by

the horses, and remonstrances against the insolence of the huntsman, and the frauds of the groom. The huntsman was too necessary to his happiness to be discarded; and he had still continued to ravage his own estate, had he not caught a cold and a fever by shooting mallards in the fens. His fever was followed by a consumption, which in a few months brought him to the grave.

Mrs. Busy was too much an economist to feel either joy or sorrow at his death. She received the compliments and consolations of her neighbours in a dark room, out of which she stole privately every night and morning to see the cows milked; and after a few days declared, that she thought a widow might employ herself better than in nursing grief; and that, for her part, she was resolved that the fortunes of her children should not be impaired by her neglect.

She therefore immediately applied herself to the reformation of abuses. She gave away the dogs, discharged the servants of the kennel and stable, and sent the horses to the next fair, but rated at so high a price, that they returned unsold. She was resolved to have nothing idle about her, and ordered them to be employed in common drudgery. They lost their sleekness and grace, and were soon purchased at half the value.

She soon disencumbered herself from her weeds, and put on a riding-hood, a coarse apron, and short petticoats, and has turned a large manor into a farm, of which she takes the management wholly upon herself. She rises before the sun to order the horses to their geers, and sees them well rubbed down at their return from work; she at-

tends the dairy morning and evening, and watches when a calf falls that it may be carefully nursed; she walks out among the sheep at noon, counts the lambs, and observes the fences, and where she finds a gap stops it with a bush till it can be better mended. In harvest she rides a-field in the waggon, and is very liberal of her ale from a wooden bottle. At her leisure hours she looks goose eggs, airs the wool room, and turns the cheese.

When respect or curiosity brings visitants to her house, she entertains them with prognosticks of a scarcity of wheat, or a rot among the sheep, and always thinks herself privileged to dismiss them, when she is to see the hogs fed, or to count her poultry on the roost.

The only things neglected about her are her children, whom she has taught nothing but the lowest household duties. In my last visit I met Miss Busy carrying grains to a sick cow, and was entertained with the accomplishments of her eldest son, a youth of such early maturity, that though he is only sixteen, she can trust him to sell corn in the market. Her younger daughter, who is eminent for her beauty, though somewhat tanned in making hay, was busy in pouring out ale to the ploughmen, that every one might have an equal share.

I could not but look with pity on this young family, doomed by the absurd prudence of their mother to ignorance and meanness; but when I recommended a more elegant education, was answered, that she never saw bookish or finical people grow rich, and that she was good for nothing

herself till she had forgotton the nicety of the boarding-school.

I am, Yours, &c.

BUCOLUS.

N° 139. TUESDAY, JULY 16, 1751.

——Sit quod vis simplex duntaxat et unum.

HOR.

Let ev'ry piece be simple and be one.

It is required by Aristotle to the perfection of tragedy, and is equally necessary to every other species of regular composition, that it should have a beginning, a middle, and an end. "The "beginning," says he, "is that which has no-"thing necessarily previous, but to which that "which follows is naturally consequent; the end, "on the contrary, is that which by necessity, or "at least according to the common course of "things, succeeds something else, but which im-"plies nothing consequent to itself; the middle is "connected on one side to something that natu-"rally goes before, and on the other to something "that naturally follows it."

Such is the rule laid down by this great critick, for the disposition of the different parts of a well constituted fable. It must begin where it may be made intelligible without introduction, and end

where the mind is left in repose, without expec tion of any farther event. The intermediate p sages must join the last effect to the first cause, a regular and unbroken concatenation; nothi must be therefore inserted which does not ap rently arise from something foregoing, and prope make way for something that succeeds it.

This precept is to be understood in its rig only with respect to great and essential events, s cannot be extended in the same force to minu circumstances and arbitrary decorations, which are more happy as they contribute more to main design; for it is always a proof of extens thought and accurate circumspection, to prom various purposes by the same act; and the i of an ornament admits use though it seems exclude necessity.

Whoever purposes, as it is expressed by Milt to build the lofty rhyme, must acquaint himself w this law of poetical architecture, and take care t his edifice be solid as well as beautiful; that thing stand single or independent, so as that it m be taken away without injuring the rest; but t from the foundation to the pinnacles one part r firm upon another.

This regular and consequential distribution among common authors frequently neglected; l the failures of those, whose example can have influence, may be safely overlooked, nor is it much use to recal obscure and unregarded nar to memory for the sake of sporting with th infamy. But if there is any writer whose gen can embellish impropriety, and whose author can make error venerable, his works are the pro

objects of critical inquisition. To expunge faults where there are no excellencies, is a task equally useless with that of the chemist, who employs the arts of separation and refinement upon ore, in which no precious metal is contained to reward his operations.

The tragedy of Samson Agonistes has been celebrated as the second work of the great author of Paradise Lost, and opposed with all the confidence of triumph to the dramatick performances of other nations. It contains indeed just sentiments, maxims of wisdom, and oracles of piety, and many passages written with the ancient spirit of choral poetry, in which there is a just and pleasing mixture of Seneca's moral declamation, with the wild enthusiasm of the Greek writers. It is therefore worthy of examination, whether a performance thus illuminated with genius, and enriched with learning, is composed according to the indispensible laws of Aristotelian criticism; and, omitting at present all other considerations, whether it exhibits a beginning, a middle, and an end.

The beginning is undoubtedly beautiful and proper, opening with a graceful abruptness, and proceeding naturally to a mournful recital of facts necessary to be known.

Samson. A little onward lend thy guiding hand
To these dark steps, a little farther on;
For yonder bank hath choice of sun and shade;
There I am wont to sit when any chance
Relieves me from my task of servile toil,
Daily in the common prison else enjoin'd me—
—O wherefore was my birth from heav'n foretold
Twice by an angel?——

—Why was my breeding order'd and prescrib'd,
As of a person separate to God,
Design'd for great exploits; if I must die
Betray'd, captiv'd, and both my eyes put out?
—Whom have I to complain of but myself?
Who this high gift of strength, committed to me
In what part lodg'd, how easily bereft me,
Under the seat of silence could not keep,
But weakly to a woman must reveal it.

His soliloquy is interrupted by a chorus or company of men of his own tribe, who condole his miseries, extenuate his fault, and conclude with a solemn vindication of divine justice. So that at the conclusion of the first act there is no design laid, no discovery made, nor any disposition formed towards the subsequent event.

In the second act, Manoah, the father of Samson, comes to seek his son, and being shewn him by the chorus, breaks out into lamentations of his misery, and comparisons of his present with his former state, representing to him the ignominy which his religion suffers, by the festival this day celebrated in honour of Dagon, to whom the idolaters ascribed his overthrow.

——Thou bear'st
Enough, and more, the burthen of that fault;
Bitterly hast thou paid and still art paying
That rigid score. A worse thing yet remains—
This day the Philistines a pop'lar feast
Here celebrate in Gaza; and proclaim
Great pomp and sacrifice, and praises loud
To Dagon, as their God, who hath deliver'd
Thee, Samson, bound and blind into their hands,
Them out of thine, who slew'st them many a slain.

Samson, touched with this reproach, makes a reply equally penitential and pious, which his father considers as the effusion of prophetick confidence.

Samson. ——God, be sure,
Will not connive or linger thus provok'd,
But will arise and his great name assert:
Dagon must stoop, and shall ere long receive
Such a discomfit as shall quite despoil him
Of all these boasted trophies won on me.

Manoah. With cause this hope relieves thee, and these words
I as a prophecy receive; for God,
Nothing more certain, will not long defer
To vindicate the glory of his name.

This part of the dialogue, as it might tend to animate or exasperate Samson, cannot, I think, be censured as wholly superfluous; but the succeeding dispute, in which Samson contends to die, and which his father breaks off, that he may go to solicit his release, is only valuable for its own beauties, and has no tendency to introduce any thing that follows it.

The next event of the drama is the arrival of Delilah, with all her graces, artifices, and allurements. This produces a dialogue in a very high degree elegant and instructive, from which she retires, after she has exhausted her persuasions, and is no more seen nor hard of; nor has her visit any effect but that of raising the character of Samson.

In the fourth act enters Harapha, the giant of Gath, whose name had never been mentioned be-

fore, and who has now no other motive of comin than to see the man whose strength and actions a so loudly celebrated.

Haraph.——Much I have heard
Of thy prodigious might, and feats perform'd
Incredible to me; in this displeas'd,
That I was never present in the place
Of those encounters, where we might have tried
Each other's force in camp or listed fields:
And now am come to see of whom such noise
Hath walk'd about, and each limb to survey,
If thy appearance answer loud report.

Samson challenges him to the combat; and a ter an interchange of reproaches, elevated by r peated defiance on one side, and imbittered l contemptuous insults on the other, Haraphа r tires; we then hear it determined, by Samso and the chorus, that no consequence good or b will proceed from their interview.

Chorus. He will directly to the lords, I fear,
And with malicious counsel stir them up
Some way or other farther to afflict thee.

Sams. He must alledge some cause, and offer'd fig
Will not dare mention, lest a question rise,
Whether he durst accept the offer or not;
And that he durst not, plain enough appear'd.

At last, in the fifth act, appears a messeng from the lords assembled at the festival of Dago with a summons, by which Samson is required come and entertain them with some proof of h strength. Samson, after a short expostulation, d *misses him* with a firm and resolute refusal; b

during the absence of the messenger, having a while defended the propriety of his conduct, he at last declares himself moved by a secret impulse to comply, and utters some dark presages of a great event to be brought to pass by his agency, under the direction of Providence.

Samson. Be of good courage; I begin to feel
Some rousing motions in me, which dispose
To something extraordinary my thoughts.
I with this messenger will go along,
Nothing to do be sure, that may dishonour,
Our law, or stain my vow of Nazarite.
If there be ought of presage in the mind,
This day will be remarkable in my life
By some great act, or of my days the last.

While Samson is conducted off by the messenger, his father returns with hopes of success in his solicitation, upon which he confers with the chorus, till their dialogue is interrupted, first by a shout of triumph, and afterwards by screams of horror and agony. As they stand deliberating where they shall be secure, a man who had been present at the show enters, and relates how Samson, having prevailed on his guide to suffer him to lean against the main pillars of the theatrical edifice, tore down the roof upon the spectators and himself.

——Those massy pillars,
With horrible confusion, to and fro,
He tugg'd, he shook, till down they came, and drew
The whole roof after them with burst of thunder,
Upon the heads of all who sat beneath——
——Samson with these immixt, inevitably
Pull'd down the same destruction on himself.

This is undoubtedly a just and regular catastrophe, and the poem has, therefore, a beginning and an end which Aristotle himself could not have disapproved; but it must be allowed to want a middle, since nothing passes between the first act and the last, that either hastens or delays the death of Samson. The whole drama, if its superfluities were cut off, would scarcely fill a single act; yet this is the tragedy which ignorance has admired, and bigotry applauded.

N° 140. SATURDAY, JULY 20, 1751.

——Quis tam Lucili fautor inepte est,
Ut non hoc fateatur.

HOR.

What doating bigot, to his faults so blind,
As not to grant me this, can Milton find?

It is common, says Bacon, to desire the end without enduring the means. Every member of society feels and acknowledges the necessity of detecting crimes, yet scarce any degree of virtue or reputation is able to secure an informer from publick hatred. The learned world has always admitted the usefulness of critical disquisitions, yet he that attempts to shew, however modestly, the failures of a celebrated writer, shall surely irritate his admirers, and incur the imputation of envy, captiousness, and malignity.

With this danger full in my view, I shall proceed to examine the sentiments of Milton's tragedy, which, though much less liable to censure than the disposition of his plan, are, like those of other writers, sometimes exposed to just exception for want of care, or want of discernment.

Sentiments are proper and improper as they consist more or less with the character and circumstances of the person to whom they are attributed, with the rules of the composition in which they are found, or with the settled and unalterable nature of things.

It is common among the tragick poets to introduce their persons alluding to events or opinions, of which they could not possibly have any knowledge. The barbarians of remote or newly discovered regions often display their skill in European learning. The god of love is mentioned in Tamerlane with all the familiarity of a Roman epigrammatist; and a late writer has put Harvey's doctrine of the circulation of the blood into the mouth of a Turkish statesman, who lived near two centuries before it was known even to philosophers or anatomists.

Milton's learning, which acquainted him with the manners of the ancient eastern nations, and his invention, which required no assistance from the common cant of poetry, have preserved him from frequent outrages of local or chronological propriety. Yet he has mentioned Chalybean steel, of which it is not very likely that his chorus should have heard, and has made Alp the general name of a mountain, in a region where the Alps could scarcely be *known*.

No medicinal liquor can assuage,
Nor breath of cooling air from snowy Alp.

He has taught Samson the tales of Circé and the Syrens, at which he apparently hints in his colloquy with Delilah.

I know thy trains,
Tho' dearly to my cost, thy gins and toils;
Thy fair *enchanted cup*, and *warbling charms*
No more on me have pow'r.

But the grossest error of this kind is the solemn introduction of the Phœnix in the last scene; which is faulty, not only as it is incongruous to the personage to whom it is ascribed, but as it is so evidently contrary to reason and nature, that it ought never to be mentioned but as a fable in a serious poem.

——Virtue giv'n for lost,
Deprest, and overthrown, as seem'd,
Like that self-begotten bird
In the Arabian woods embost
That no second knows, nor third,
And lay ere while a holocaust;
From out her ashy womb now teem'd
Revives, reflourishes, then vigorous most
When most unactive deem'd,
And though her body die, her fame survives,
A secular bird ages of lives.

Another species of impropriety, is the unsuitableness of thoughts to the general character of the poem. The seriousness and solemnity of

tragedy necessarily rejects all pointed or epigrammatical expressions, all remote conceits and supposition of ideas. Samson's complaint is therefore too elaborate to be natural.

> As in the land of darkness, yet in light,
> To live a life half dead, a living death,
> And bury'd: but O yet more miserable
> Myself my sepulchre, a moving grave;
> Bury'd, yet not exempt,
> By privilege of death and burial,
> From worst of other evils, pains and wrongs.

All allusions to low and trivial objects, with which contempt is usually associated, are doubtless unsuitable to a species of composition which ought to be always awful, though not always magnificent. The remark therefore of the chorus on good and bad news, seems to want elevation.

> *Manoah.* A little stay will bring some notice hither.
> *Chor.* Of good or bad so great, of bad the sooner;
> For evil news *rides post*, while good news *baits*.

But of all meanness, that has least to plead which is produced by mere verbal conceits, which depending only upon sounds, lose their existence by the change of a syllable. Of this kind is the following dialogue.

> *Chor.* But had we best retire? I see a *storm*.
> *Sams.* Fair days have oft contracted wind and *rain*.
> *Chor.* But this another tempest brings.
> *Sams.* Be less abstruse, my riddling days are past.
> *Chor.* Look now for no enchanting voice, nor fear
> The bait of honied words; a rougher tongue
> Draws hitherward, I know him by his stride,
> The giant Harapha.

And yet more despicable are the lines in Manoah's paternal kindness is commended b chorus.

> Fathers are wont to *lay up* for their sons,
> Thou for thy son art bent to *lay out* all—

Samson's complaint of the inconveniences prisonment is not wholly without verbal quain

> ——I a prisoner chain'd scarce freely draw
> The air, imprison'd also, close and damp.

From the sentiments we may properly de to the consideration of the language, whi imitation of the ancients, is through the dialogue remarkably simple and unadorned, s heightened by epithets, or varied by figures sometimes metaphors find admission, even their consistency is not accurately pres Thus Samson confounds loquacity with a wreck.

> How could I once look up, or heave the head,
> Who, like a foolish *pilot*, have *shipwreck'd*
> My *vessel* trusted to me from above,
> Gloriously *rigg'd*; and for a word, a tear,
> Fool, have *divulg'd* the *secret gift* of God
> To a deceitful woman?——

And the chorus talks of adding fuel to flam report.

> He's gone, and who knows how he may *report*
> Thy *words* by *adding fuel to the flame*?

The versification is in the dialogue much more smooth and harmonious than in the parts allotted to the chorus, which are often so harsh and dissonant, as scarce to preserve, whether the lines end with or without rhymes, any appearance of metrical regularity.

> Or do my eyes misrepresent? can this be he,
> That heroick, that renown'd,
> Irresistible Samson; whom unarm'd,
> No strength of men, or fiercest wild beast, could withstand;
> Who tore the lion, as the lion tears the kid?

Since I have thus pointed out the faults of Milton, critical integrity requires that I should endeavour to display his excellencies, though they will not easily be discovered in short quotations, because they consist in the justness of diffuse reasonings, or in the contexture and method of continued dialogues; this play having none of these descriptions, similies, or splendid sentences, with which other tragedies are so lavishly adorned.

Yet some passages may be selected which seem to deserve particular notice, either as containing sentiments of passion, representations of life, precepts of conduct, or sallies of imagination. It is not easy to give a stronger representation of the weariness of despondency than in the words of Samson to his father.

> ——I feel my genial spirits droop,
> My hopes all flat; nature within me seems
> In all her functions weary of herself;

My race of glory run, and race of shame;
And I shall shortly be with them that rest.

The reply of Samson to the flattering Delila affords a just and striking description of the strata gems and allurements of feminine hypocrisy.

——These are thy wonted arts,
And arts of ev'ry woman false like thee,
To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray,
Then as repentant to submit, beseech,
And reconcilement move with feign'd remorse,
Confess and promise wonders in her change;
Not truly penitent, but chief to try
Her husband, how far urg'd his patience bears,
His virtue or weakness which way to assail:
Then with more cautious and instructed skill
Again transgresses, and again submits.

When Samson has refused to make himself a spectacle at the feast of Dagon, he first justifies his behaviour to the chorus, who charge him with having served the Philistines, by a very just distinction; and then destroys the common excuse of cowardice and servility, which always confound temptation with compulsion.

Chor. Yet with thy strength thou serv'st the Philistines.

Sams. Not in their idol worship, but by labour
Honest and lawful to deserve my food
Of those who have me in their civil power.

Chor. Where the heart joins not, outward acts defile not.

Sams. Where outward force constrains, the sentence holds,
But who constrains me to the temple of Dagon
Not dragging? The Philistine lords command.

Commands are no constraints. If I obey them,
I do it freely, venturing to displease
God for the fear of man, and man prefer,
Set God behind.

The complaint of blindness which Samson pours ut at the beginning of the tragedy is equally addressed to the passions and the fancy. The enuieration of his miseries is succeeded by a very leasing train of poetical images, and concluded by uch expostulations and wishes, as reason too often ubmits to learn from despair.

O first created beam, and thou great word
Let there be light, and light was over all;
Why am I thus bereav'd thy prime decree?
The sun to me is dark,
And silent as the moon,
When she deserts the night,
Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.
Since light so necessary is to life,
And almost life itself; if it be true,
That light is in the soul,
She all in ev'ry part; why was the sight
To such a tender ball as th' eye confin'd,
So obvious and so easy to be quench'd,
And not, as feeling, thro' all parts, diffus'd,
That she may look at will thro' ev'ry pore.

Such are the faults and such the beauties of amson Agonistes, which I have shewn with no ther purpose than to promote the knowledge of rue criticism. The everlasting verdure of Milon's laurels has nothing to fear from the blasts of alignity; nor can my attempt produce any other ffect, than to strengthen their shoots by lopping *heir luxuriance.*

N° 141. TUESDAY, JULY 23, 1751.

Hilarisque, tamen cum pondere, virtus.

STAT.

Greatness with ease and gay severity.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

POLITICIANS have long observed, that the greatest events may be often traced back to slender causes. Petty competition or casual friendship, the prudence of a slave, or the garrulity of a woman, have hindered or promoted the most important schemes, and hastened or retarded the revolutions of empire.

Whoever shall review his life will generally find that the whole tenor of his conduct has been determined by some accident of no apparent moment, or by a combination of inconsiderable circumstances, acting when his imagination was unoccupied, and his judgment unsettled; and that his principles and actions have taken their colour from some secret infusion, mingled without design in the current of his ideas. The desires that predominate in our hearts, are instilled by imperceptible communications at the time when we look

upon the various scenes of the world, and the different employments of men, with the neutrality of inexperience; and we come forth from the nursery or the school, invariably destined to the pursuit of great acquisitions or petty accomplishments.

Such was the impulse by which I have been kept in motion from my earliest years. I was born to an inheritance which gave my childhood a claim to distinction and caresses, and was accustomed to hear applauses, before they had any influence on my thoughts. The first praise of which I remember myself sensible was that of good-humour, which whether I deserved it or not when it was bestowed, I have since made it my whole business to propagate and maintain.

When I was sent to school, the gaiety of my look, and the liveliness of my loquacity, soon gained me admission to hearts not yet fortified against affection by artifice or interest. I was entrusted with every stratagem, and associated in every sport; my company gave alacrity to a frolick, and gladness to holiday. I was indeed so much employed in adjusting or executing schemes of diversion, that I had no leisure for my tasks, but was furnished with exercises, and instructed in my lessons by some kind patron of the higher classes. My master not suspecting my deficiency, or unwilling to detect what his kindness would not punish nor his impartiality excuse, allowed me to escape with a slight examination, laughed at the pertness of my ignorance and the sprightliness of my absurdities, and could not forbear to shew that he regarded me with such tenderness, as genius and learning can *seldom excite.*

From school I was dismissed to the university, where I soon drew upon me the notice of the younger students, and was the constant partner of their morning walks and evening compotations. I was not indeed much celebrated for literature, but was looked on with indulgence as a man of parts, who wanted nothing but the dulness of a scholar, and might become eminent whenever he should condescend to labour and attention. My tutor a while reproached me with negligence, and repressed my sallies with supercilious gravity; yet having natural good humour lurking in his heart, he could not long hold out against the power of hilarity, but after a few months began to relax the muscles of disciplinarian moroseness, received me with smiles after an elopement, and that he might not betray his trust to his fondness, was content to spare my diligence by increasing his own.

Thus I continued to dissipate the gloom of collegiate austerity, to waste my own life in idleness, and lure others from their studies, till the happy hour arrived, when I was sent to London. I soon discovered the town to be the proper element of youth and gaiety, and was quickly distinguished as a wit by the ladies, a species of beings only heard of at the university, whom I had no sooner the happiness of approaching than I devoted all my faculties to the ambition of pleasing them.

A wit, Mr. Rambler, in the dialect of ladies, is not always a man, who, by the action of a vigorous fancy upon comprehensive knowledge, brings distant ideas unexpectedly together, who by some pe-

culiar acuteness discovers resemblance in objects dissimilar to common eyes, or by mixing heterogeneous notions dazzles the attention with sudden scintillations of conceit. A lady's wit is a man who can make ladies laugh, to which, however easy it may seem, many gifts of nature, and attainments of art, must commonly concur. He that hopes to be conceived as a wit in female assemblies should have a form neither so amiable as to strike with admiration, nor so coarse as to raise disgust, with an understanding too feeble to be dreaded, and too forcible to be despised. The other parts of the character are more subject to variation; it was formerly essential to a wit, that half his back should be covered with a snowy fleece, and at a time yet more remote no man was a wit without his boots. In the days of the Spectator, a snuff-box seems to have been indispensible; but in my time an embroidered coat was sufficient, without any precise regulation of the rest of his dress.

But wigs and boots and snuff-boxes are vain, without a perpetual resolution to be merry; and who can always find supplies of mirth! Juvenal indeed, in his comparison of the two opposite philosophers, wonders only whence an unexhausted fountain of tears could be discharged: but had Juvenal, with all his spirit, undertaken my province he would have found constant gaiety equally difficult to be supported. Consider, Mr. Rambler, and compassionate the condition of a man, who has taught every company to expect from him a continual feast of laughter, an unintermitted stream of jocularity. The task of every other slave has an end. The rower in time reaches the port; the

lexicographer at last finds the conclusion of his alphabet; only the hapless wit has his labour always to begin, the call for novelty is never satisfied, and one jest only raises expectation of another.

I know that among men of learning and asperity, the retainers to the female world are not much regarded; yet I cannot but hope that if you knew at how dear a rate our honours are purchased, you would look with some gratulation on our success, and with some pity on our miscarriages. Think on the misery of him who is condemned to cultivate barrenness and ransack vacuity; who is obliged to continue his talk when his meaning is spent, to raise merriment without images, to harass his imagination in quest of thoughts which he cannot start, and his memory in pursuit of narratives which he cannot overtake; observe the efforts with which he strains to conceal despondency by a smile, and the distress in which he sits while the eyes of the company are fixed upon him as their last refuge from silence and dejection.

It were endless to recount the shifts to which I have been reduced, or to enumerate the different species of artificial wit. I regularly frequented coffeehouses, and have often lived a week upon an expression of which he who dropped it did not know the value. When fortune did not favour my erratick industry, I gleaned jests at home from obsolete farces. To collect wit was indeed safe, for I consorted with none that looked much into books, but to disperse it was the difficulty. A seeming negligence was often useful, and I have

very successfully made a reply not to what the lady had said, but to what it was convenient for me to hear; for very few were so perverse as to rectify a mistake which had given occasion to a burst of merriment. Sometimes I drew the conversation up by degrees to a proper point, and produced a conceit which I had treasured up, like sportsmen who boast of killing the foxes which they lodge in the covert. Eminence is however in some happy moments gained at less expence; I have delighted a whole circle at one time with a series of quibbles, and made myself good company at another, by scalding my fingers, or mistaking a lady's lap for my own chair.

These are artful deceits and useful expedients; but expedients are at length exhausted, and deceits detected. Time itself, among other injuries, diminishes the power of pleasing, and I now find in my forty-fifth year many pranks and pleasantries very coldly received, which had formerly filled a whole room with jollity and acclamation. I am under the melancholy necessity of supporting that character by study, which I gained by levity, having learned too late that gaiety must be recommended by higher qualities, and that mirth can never please long but as the efflorescence of a mind loved for its luxuriance, but esteemed for its usefulness.

I am, &c.

PAPILIUS.

N° 142. SATURDAY, JULY 27, 1751.

Ενθα δ' ανηρ ενιαυσι πιλωριος.——δ' δε μιν αλλων
Πολλον αλλ' α πανυδιν εων αδινμενα ηδη
Και γαρ δεινα ιστινδρο πιλωριον, ωδε ιδεσθαι
Ανδρι σιτοφαγω.

HOMER.

A giant shepherd here his flock maintains
Far from the rest, and solitary reigns,
In shelter thick of horrid shade reclin'd;
And gloomy mischiefs labour in his mind.
A form enormous! far unlike the race
Of human birth, in stature or in face.

POPE.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

HAVING been accustomed to retire annually from the town, I lately accepted the invitation of Eugenio, who has an estate and seat in a distant county. As we were unwilling to travel without improvement, we turned often from the direct road to please ourselves with the view of nature or of art; we examined every wild mountain and medicinal spring, criticised every edifice, contemplated every ruin, and compared every scene of action with the narratives of historians. By this succession of amusements, we enjoyed the exercise of a journey without suffering the fatigue, and had nothing to regret but that, by a progress so leisurely and gentle, we missed the adventures of a post-chaise, and the pleasure of alarming villages with

the tumult of our passage, and of disguising our insignificancy by the dignity of hurry.

The first week after our arrival at Eugenio's house was passed in receiving visits from his neighbours, who crowded about him with all the eagerness of benevolence; some impatient to learn the news of the court and town, that they might be qualified by authentick information to dictate to the rural politicians on the next bowling day; others desirous of his interest to accommodate disputes, or of his advice in the settlement of their fortunes and the marriage of their children.

The civilities which he had received were soon to be returned; and I passed some time with great satisfaction in roving through the country, and viewing the seats, gardens, and plantations which are scattered over it. My pleasure would indeed have been greater had I been sometimes allowed to wander in a park or wilderness alone, but to appear as the friend of Eugenio was an honour not to be enjoyed without some inconveniencies; so much was every one solicitous for my regard, that I could seldom escape to solitude, or steal a moment from the emulation of complaisance and the vigilance of officiousness.

In these rambles of good neighbourhood, we frequently passed by a house of unusual magnificence. While I had my curiosity yet distracted among many novelties, it did not much attract my observation; but in a short time I could not forbear surveying it with particular notice; for the length of the wall which inclosed the gardens, the disposition of the shades that waved over it, and the

canals, of which I could obtain some glimpses through the trees from our own windows, gave me reason to expect more grandeur and beauty than I had yet seen in that province. I therefore inquired, as we rode by it, why we never, amongst our excursions, spent an hour where there was such an appearance of splendour and affluence. Eugenio told me that the seat which I so much admired, was commonly called in the country the haunted house, and that no visits were paid there by any of the gentlemen whom I had yet seen. As the haunts of incorporeal beings are generally ruinous, neglected, and desolate, I easily conceived that there was something to be explained, and told him that I supposed it only fairy ground, on which we might venture by day-light without danger. The danger, says he, is indeed only that of appearing to solicit the acquaintance of a man with whom it is not possible to converse without infamy, and who has driven from him, by his insolence or malignity, every human being who can live without him.

Our conversation was then accidentally interrupted; but my inquisitive humour being now in motion, could not rest without a full account of this newly discovered prodigy. I was soon informed that the fine house and spacious gardens were haunted by squire Bluster, of whom it was very easy to learn the character, since nobody had regard for him sufficient to hinder them from telling whatever they could discover.

Squire Bluster is descended of an ancient family. The estate which his ancestors had immemorially possessed was much augmented by captain Bluster,

who served under Drake in the reign of Elizabeth, and the Blusters, who were before only petty gentlemen, have from that time frequently represented the shire in parliament, been chosen to present addresses, and given laws at hunting-matches and races. They were eminently hospitable and popular, till the father of this gentleman died of an election. His lady went to the grave soon after him, and left the heir, then only ten years old, to the care of his grandmother, who would not suffer him to be controlled, because she could not bear to hear him cry; and never sent him to school, because she was not able to live without his company. She taught him however very early to inspect the steward's accounts, to dog the butler from the cellar, and to catch the servants at a junket; so that he was at the age of eighteen a complete master of all the lower arts of domestick policy, had often on the road detected combinations between the coachman and the ostler, and procured the discharge of nineteen maids for illicit correspondence with cottagers and char-women.

By the opportunities of parsimony which minority affords, and which the probity of his guardians had diligently improved, a very large sum of money was acucmulated, and he found himself, when he took his affairs into his own hands, the richest man in the county. It has been long the custom of this family to celebrate the heir's completion of his twenty-first year, by an entertainment at which the house is thrown open to all that are inclined to enter it, and the whole province flocks together as to a general festivity. On this occasion young Bluster exhibited the first tokens of

his future eminence, by shaking his purse at an old gentleman, who had been the intimate friend of his father, and offering to wager a greater sum than he could afford to venture; a practice with which he has, at one time or other, insulted every freeholder within ten miles round him.

His next acts of offence were committed in a contentious and spiteful vindication of the privileges of his manors, and a rigorous and relentless prosecution of every man that presumed to violate his game. As he happens to have no estate adjoining equal to his own, his oppressions are often borne without resistance, for fear of a long suit, of which he delights to count the expences without the least solicitude about the event; for he knows that where nothing but an honorary right is contested, the poorer antagonist must always suffer, whatever shall be the last decision of the law.

By the success of some of these disputes, he has so elated his insolence, and by reflection upon the general hatred which they have brought upon him, so irritated his virulence, that his whole life is spent in meditating or executing mischief. It is his common practice to procure his hedges to be broken in the night, and then to demand satisfaction for damages which his grounds have suffered from his neighbours cattle. An old widow was yesterday soliciting Eugenio to enable her to replevin her only cow then in the pound by squire Bluster's order, who had sent one of his agents to take advantage of her calamity, and persuade her to sell the cow at an under rate. He has driven a day-labourer from his cottage, for gathering *black*berries in a hedge for his children; and has

now an old woman in the county-jail for a trespass which the committed, by coming into his ground to pick up acorns for her hog.

Money, in whatever hands, will confer power. Distress will fly to immediate refuge, without much consideration of remote consequences. Bluster has therefore a despotick authority in many families, whom he has assisted, on pressing occasions, with larger sums than they can easily repay. The only visits that he makes are to these houses of misfortune, where he enters with the insolence of absolute command, enjoys the terrors of the family, exacts their obedience, riots at their charge, and in the height of his joy insults the father with menaces, and the daughters with obscenity.

He is of late somewhat less offensive; for one of his debtors, after gentle expostulations, by which he was only irritated to grosser outrage, seized him by the sleeve, led him trembling into the court yard, and closed the door upon him in a stormy night. He took his usual revenge next morning by a writ; but the debt was discharged by the assistance of Eugenio.

It is his rule to suffer his tenants to owe him rent, because by this indulgence he secures to himself the power of seizure whenever he has an inclination to amuse himself with calamity, and feast his ears with entreaties and lamentations. Yet as he is sometimes capriciously liberal to those whom he happens to adopt as favourites, and lets his lands at a cheap rate, his farms are never long unoccupied; and when one is ruined by oppression, the possibility of better fortune quickly lures another to supply his place.

Such is the life of Squire Bluster; a man in whose power fortune has liberally placed the means of happiness, but who has defeated all her gifts of their end by the depravity of his mind. He is wealthy without followers; he is magnificent without witnesses; he has birth without alliance, and influence without dignity. His neighbours scorn him as a brute; his dependents dread him as an oppressor; and he has only the gloomy comfort of reflecting, that if he is hated, he is likewise feared.

I am, SIR, &c.

VAGULUS.

N° 143. TUESDAY, JULY 30, 1751.

——Moveat cornicula risum
Furtivis nudata coloribus——

HOR.

Lest when the birds their various colours claim
Stripp'd of his stolen pride, the crow forlorn
Should stand the laughter of the publick scorn.

FRANCIS.

AMONG the innumerable practices by which interest or envy have taught those who live upon literary fame to disturb each other at their airy banquets, one of the most common is the charge of plagiarism. When the excellence of a *new* composition can no longer be contested, and *malice* is compelled to give way to the unanimity

: applause, there is yet this one expedient to be ied, by which the author may be degraded, ıough his work he reverenced; and the excel- nce which we cannot obscure, may be set at such distance as not to overpower our fainter lustre.

This accusation is dangerous, because, even hen it is false, it may be sometimes urged with robability. Bruyere declares, that we are come ıto the world too late to produce any thing new, ıat nature and life are preocupied, and that des- ription and sentiment have been long exhausted. t is indeed certain, that whoever attempts any)mmon topick, will find unexpected coincidences f his thoughts with those of other writers; nor ın the nicest judgment always distinguish ac- dental similitude from artful imitation.

There is likewise a common stock of images, a ttled mode of arrangement, and a beaten track : transition, which all authors suppose themselves liberty to use, and which produce the resem- ance generally observable among cotemporaries. o that in books which best deserve the name of riginals, there is little new beyond the disposition : materials already provided; the same ideas and)mbinations of ideas have been long in the pos- ssion of other hands; and by restoring to every an his own, as the Romans must have returned to ıeir cots from the possession of the world, so the ost inventive and fertile genius would reduce his lios to a few pages. Yet the author who imi- tes his predecessors only by furnishing himself ith thoughts and elegancies out of the same ge- ral magazine of literature, can with little more *opriety be* reproached as a plagiary, than the

architect can be censured as a mean copier of Angelo or Wren, because he digs his marble from the same quarry, squares his stones by the same art, and unites them in columns of the same orders.

Many subjects fall under the consideration of an author, which being limited by nature can admit only of slight and accidental diversities. All definitions of the same thing must be nearly the same; and descriptions which are definitions of a more lax and fanciful kind, must always have in some degree that resemblance to each other which they all have to their object. Different poets describing the spring or the sea would mention the zephyrs and the flowers, the billows and the rocks; reflecting on human life, they would, without any communication of opinions, lament the deceitfulness of hope, the fugacity of pleasure, the fragility of beauty, and the frequency of calamity; and for palliatives of these incurable miseries, they would concur in recommending kindness, temperance, caution, and fortitude.

When therefore there are found in Virgil and Horace two similar passages,

Hæ tibi erunt artes——
Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.——
VIRG.

To tame the proud, the fetter'd slave to free:
These are imperial arts, and worthy thee.
DRYD.

Imperet bellante prior, jacentem
Lenis in hostem.
HOR.

Let Cæsar spread his conquest far,
Less pleas'd to triumph than to spare

it is surely not necessary to suppose with a late critick, that one is copied from the other, since neither Virgil nor Horace can be supposed ignorant of the common duties of humanity, and the virtue of moderation in success.

Cicero and Ovid have on very different occasions remarked how little of the honour of a victory belongs to the general, when his soldiers and his fortune have made their deductions; yet why should Ovid be suspected to have owed to Tully an observation which perhaps occurs to every man that sees or hears of military glories?

Tully observes of Achilles, that had not Homer written, his valour had been without praise.

Nisi Ilias illa extitisset, idem tumulus qui corpus ejus contexerat nomen ejus obruisset.

Unless the Iliad had been published, his name had been lost in the tomb that covered his body.

Horace tells us with more energy, that there were brave men before the wars of Troy, but they were lost in oblivion for want of a poet.

Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona
Multi, sed omnes illachrymabiles
Urgentur, ignotique longa
Nocte, carent quia vate sacro.

Before great Agamemnon reign'd,
Reign'd kings as great as he, and brave,
Whose huge ambition's now contain'd
In the small compass of a grave:
In endless night they sleep, unwept, unknown:
No bard had they to make all time their own.

FRANCIS.

Tully inquires, in the same oration, why, but for fame, we disturb a short life with so many fatigues?

Quid est quod in hoc tam exiguo vitæ curriculo et tam brevi, tantis nos in laboribus exerceamus?

Why in so small a circuit of life should we employ ourselves in so many fatigues?

Horace inquires in the same manner,

Quid brevi fortes jaculamur ævo
Multa?

Why do we aim, with eager strife,
At things beyond the mark of life?

FRANCIS.

when our life is of a short duration, why we form such numerous designs? But Horace, as well as Tully, might discover that records are needful to preserve the memory of actions, and that no records were so durable as poems; either of them might find out that life is short, and that we consume it in unnecessary labour.

There are other flowers of fiction so widely scattered and so easily cropped, that it is scarcely just to tax the use of them as an act by which any particular writer is despoiled of his garland; for they may be said to have been planted by the ancients in the open road of poetry for the accommodation of their successors, and to be the right of every one that has art to pluck them without injuring their

colours or their fragrance. The passage of Orpheus to hell, with the recovery and second loss of Eurydice, have been described after Boetius by Pope, in such a manner as might justly leave him suspected of imitation, were not the images such as they might both have derived from more ancient writers.

Quæ sontes agitant metu
Ultrices scelerum deæ
Jam mœstæ lacrymis madent
Non Ixionium caput
Velox præcipitat rota.

The pow'rs of vengeance, while they hear,
Touch'd which compassion, drop a tear;
Ixion's rapid wheel is bound,
Fix'd in attention to the sound.

F. LEWIS.

Thy stone, O Sysiphus, stands still,
Ixion rests upon his wheel,
And the pale spectres dance!
The furies sink upon their iron beds.

Tandem, vincimur, arbiter
Umbrarum, miseranis, ait.——
Donemus, comitem viro,
Emtam carmine, conjugem.

Subdu'd at length, Hell's pitying monarch cry'd,
The song rewarded, let us yield the bride.

F. LEWIS.

He sung, and hell consented
To hear the poet's prayer;
Stern Proserpine relented,
And gave him back the fair.

Heu, noctis, prope terminos
Orpheus Eurydicen suam
Vidit, perdidit, occidit.

Nor yet the golden verge of day begun,
When Orpheus, her unhappy lord,
Eurydice to life restor'd,
At once beheld, and lost, and was undone.

F. LEWIS.

But soon, too soon, the lover turns his eyes:
Again she falls, again she dies, she dies!

No writer can be fully convicted of imitation except there is a concurrence of more resemblance than can be imagined to have happened by chance; as where the same ideas are conjoined without any natural series or necessary coherence, or where not only the thought but the words are copied. Thus it can scarcely be doubted, that in the first of the following passages Pope remembered Ovid, and that in the second he copied Crashaw.

Sæpe pater dixit, studium quid inutile tentas?
Mœonides nullas ipse reliquit opes———
Sponte sua carmen numeros veniebat ad aptos
Et quod conabar scribere, versus erat.

Quit, quit this barren trade, my father cry'd:
Ev'n Homer left no riches when he dy'd———
In verse spontaneous flow'd my native strain,
Forc'd by no sweat or labour of the brain.

F. LEWIS.

I left no calling for this idle trade;
No duty broke, no father disobey'd;
While yet a child, ere yet a fool to fame,
I lisp'd in numbers, for the numbers came.

POPE.

———This plain floor,
Believe me, reader, can say more
Than many a braver marble can,
Here lies a truly honest man.

CRASHAW.

This modest stone, what few vain marbles can,
May truly say, Here lies an honest man.

POPE.

Conceits, or thoughts not immediately impressed by sensible objects, or necessarily arising from the coalition or comparison of common sentiments, may be with great justice suspected whenever they are found a second time. Thus Waller probably owed to Grotius an elegant compliment.

Here lies the learned Savil's heir,
So early wise, and lasting fair,
That none except her years they told,
Thought her a child, or thought her old.

WALLER.

Unica lux sæculi, genitoris gloria, nemo
Quem puerum, nemo credidit esse senem.

GROT.

The age's miracle, his father's joy!
Nor old you wou'd pronounce him, nor a boy.

F. LEWIS.

And Prior was indebted for a pretty illustration to Alleyne's poetical history of Henry the Seventh.

For nought but light itself, itself can show,
And only kings can write what kings can do.

ALLEYNE.

Your musick's power, your musick must disclose,
For what light is, 'tis only light that shews.

PRIOR.

And with yet more certainty may the same writer be censured, for endeavouring the clandestine ap-

propriation of a thought which he borrowed, surely without thinking himself disgraced, from an epigram of Plato.

Τη Παφιη το κατοπτρον· τουτι τουν μην υρασθαι
Ουκ ειδλω, οιην δ' ην παρος, ου δοκιμαζω.

Venus, take my votive glass,
Since I am not what I was;
What from this day I shall be,
Venus, let me never see.

As not every instance of similitude can be considered as a proof of imitation, so not every imitation ought to be stigmatized as a plagiarism. The adoption of a noble sentiment, or the insertion of a borrowed ornament, may sometimess display so much judgment as will almost compensate for invention; and an inferior genius may, without any imputation of servility, pursue the path of the ancients, provided he declines to read in their footsteps.

N° 144. SATURDAY, AUGUST 8, 1751.

Daphnidis arcum
Fregisti et calamos: quae tu, perverse Menalca,
Et cum vidisti puero donata, dolebas;
Et si non aliqua nocuisses mortuus esses.

VIRG.

The bow of Daphnis and the shafts you broke;
When the fair boy receiv'd the gift of right;
And but for mischief, you had dy'd for spite.

DRYDEN.

It is impossible to mingle in conversation without observing the difficulty with which a new name makes its way into the world. The first appearance of excellence unites multitudes against it: unexpected opposition rises up on every side; the celebrated and the obscure join in the confederacy; subtilty furnishes arms to impudence, and invention leads on credulity.

The strength and unanimity of this alliance is not easily conceived. It might be expected that no man should suffer his heart to be inflamed with malice but by injuries; that none should busy himself in contesting the pretensions of another, but when some right of his own was involved in the question; that at least hostilities commenced without cause should quickly cease: that the armies of malignity should soon disperse, when no com-

mon interest could be found to hold them toget
and that the attack upon a rising character sh
be left to those who had something to hope or
from the event.

The hazards of those that aspire to emin
would be much diminished if they have none
acknowledged rivals to encounter. Their ene
would then be few, and what is of yet greater
portance, would be known. But what can
is sufficient to ward off the blows of invisibl
sailants, or what force can stand against uninter
ted attacks, and a continued succession of enem
Yet such is the state of the world, that no so
can any man emerge from the croud, and fix
eyes of the publick upon him, than he stands
mark to the arrows of lurking calumny, an
ceives in the tumult of hostility, from distant
from nameless hands, wounds not always eas
be cured.

It is probable that the onset against the ca
dates for renown, is originally incited by th
who imagine themselves in danger of suffering
their success; but when war is once decla
volunteers flock to the standard, multitudes fo
the camp only for want of employment, and fl
squadrons are dispersed to every part, so ple
with an opportunity of mischief that they
without prospect of praise, and pillage with
hope of profit.

When any man has endeavoured to deserve
tinction, he will be surprised to hear himself cen
ed where he could not expect to have been nam
he will find the utmost acrimony of malice am
those whom he never could have offended.

As there are to be found in the service of envy en of every diversity of temper and degree of unrstanding, calumny is diffused by all arts and ethods of propagation. Nothing is too gross or o refined, too cruel or too trifling, to be practis-; very little regard is had to the rules of honrable hostility, but every weapon is accounted wful, and those that cannot make a thrust at life e content to keep themselves in play with petty alevolence, to teaze with feeble blows and impont disturbance.

But as the industry of observation has divided e most miscellaneous and confused assemblages to proper classes, and ranged the insects of the mmer, that torment us with their drones or stings, r their several tribes; the persecutors of merit, twithstanding their numbers, may be likewise mmodiously distinguished into Roarers, Whisrers, and Moderators.

The Roarer is any enemy rather terrible than ngerous. He has no other qualification for a ampion of controversy than a hardened front d strong voice. Having seldom so much desire confute as to silence, he depends rather upon ciferation than argument, and has very little re to adjust one part of his accusation to anher, to preserve decency in his language, or probility in his narratives. He has always a store reproachful epithets and contemptuous appellaons ready to be produced as occasion may reire, which by constant use he pours out with sistless volubility. If the wealth of a trader is entioned, he without hesitation devotes him to ankruptcy; if the beauty and elegance of a lady

be commended, he wonders how the town can f
in love with rustick deformity; if a new perf
mance of genius happens to be celebrated, he p
nounces the writer a hopeless idiot, without kno
ledge of books or life, and without the understa
ing by which it must be acquired. His exagge
tions are generally without effect upon those wh
he compels to hear them; and though it s
sometimes happen that the timorous are awed
his violence, and the credulous mistake his co
dence for knowledge, yet the opinions which
endeavours to suppress soon recover their forn
strength, as the trees that bend to the temp
erect themselves again when its force is past.

The whisperer is more dangerous. He eas
gains attention by a soft address, and exci
curiosity by an air of importance. As secrets
not to be made cheap by promiscuous publicati
he calls a select audience about him, and grati
their vanity with an appearance of trust by co
municating his intelligence in a low voice.
the trader he can tell, that though he seems
manage an extensive commerce, and talks in hi
terms of the funds, yet his wealth is not equal
his reputation; he has lately suffered much by
expensive project, and had a greater share thar
acknowledged in the rich ship that perished by t
storm. Of the beauty he has little to say, b
that they who see her in a morning do not d
cover all those graces which are admired in t
park. Of the writer he affirms, with great c
tainty, that though the excellence of the work
incontestable, he can claim but a small part of t
reputation; that he owed most of the images a

sentiments to a secret friend; and that the accuracy and equality of the stile was produced by the successive correction of the chief criticks of the age.

As every one is pleased with imagining that he knows something not yet commonly divulged, secret history easily gains credit; but it is for the most part believed only while it circulates in whispers; and when once it is openly told, is openly confuted.

The most pernicious enemy is the man of Moderation. Without interest in the question, or any motive but honest curiosity, this impartial and zealous inquirer after truth is ready to hear either side, and always disposed to kind interpretations and favourable opinions. He hath heard the trader's affairs reported with great variation, and after a diligent comparison of the evidence, concludes it probable that the splendid superstructure of business being originally built upon a narrow basis, has lately been found to totter; but between dilatory payment and bankruptcy there is a great distance; many merchants have supported themselves by expedients for a time without any final injury to their creditors; and what is lost by one adventure may be recovered by another. He believes that a young lady pleased with admiration, and desirous to make perfect what is already excellent, may heighten her charms by artificial improvements, but surely most of her beauties must be genuine, and who can say that he is wholly what he endeavours to appear? The author he knows to be a man of diligence, who perhaps *does not* sparkle with the fire of Homer,

but has the judgment to discover his own deficiencies, and to supply them by the help of others; and in his opinion modesty is a quality so amiable and rare, that it ought to find a patron wherever it appears, and may justly be preferred by the publick suffrage to petulant wit and ostentatious literature.

He who thus discovers failings with unwillingness, and extenuates the faults which cannot be denied, puts an end at once to doubt or vindication; his hearers repose upon his candour and veracity, and admit the charge without allowing the excuse.

Such are the arts by which the envious, the idle, the peevish, and the thoughtless, obstruct that worth which they cannot equal; and by artifices thus easy, sordid, and detestable, is industry defeated, beauty blasted, and genius depressed.

N° 145. TUESDAY, AUGUST 6, 1751.

Non si priores Mæonius tenet
Sedes Homerus, Pindaricæ latent,
Ceæque & Alcæi minaces
Stesichorique graves Camœnae.

HOR.

What though the muse her Homer thrones
High above all the immortal quire;
Nor Pindar's rapture she disowns,
Nor hides the plaintive Cœan lyre:
Alcæus strikes the tyrant's soul with dread,
Nor yet is grave Stesichorus unread.

FRANCIS.

It is allowed that vocations and employments of least dignity are of the most apparent use; that the meanest artisan or manufacturer contributes more to the accommodation of life, than the profound scholar and argumentative theorist, and that the publick would suffer less present inconvenience from the banishment of philosophers than from the extinction of any common trade.

Some have been so forcibly struck with this observation, that they have in the first warmth of their discovery, thought it reasonable to alter the common distribution of dignity, and ventured to condemn mankind of universal ingratitude. For justice exacts, that those by whom we are most benefited should be most honoured. And what labour can be more useful than that which procures to families and communities those necessaries which

supply the wants of nature, or those conveniencies by which ease, security, and elegance are conferred?

This is one of the innumerable theories which the first attempt to reduce them into practice certainly destroys. If we estimate dignity by immediate usefulness, agriculture is undoubtedly the first and noblest science; yet we see the plough driven, the clod broken, the manure spread, the seeds scattered, and the harvest reaped, by men whom those that feed upon their industry will never be persuaded to admit into the same rank with heroes, or with sages; and who, after all the confessions which truth may exort in favour of their occupation, must be content to fill up the lowest class of the commonwealth, to form the base of the pyramid of subordination, and lie buried in obscurity themselves, while they support all that is splendid, conspicuous, or exalted.

It will be found upon a closer inspection, that this part of the conduct of mankind is by no means contrary to reason or equity. Remuneratory honours are proportioned at once to the usefulness and difficulty of performances, and are properly adjusted by comparison of the mental and corporeal abilities which they appear to employ. That work, however necessary, which is carried on only by muscular strength and manual dexterity, is not of equal esteem, in the consideration of rational beings, with the tasks that exercise the intellectual power, and require the active vigour of imagination, or the gradual and laborious investigations of *reason*.

The merit of all manual occupations seems to terminate in the inventor; and surely the first ages cannot be charged with ingratitude; since those who civilized barbarians, and taught them how to secure themselves from cold and hunger, were numbered among their deities. But these arts once discovered by philosophy, and facilitated by experience, are afterwards practised with very little assistance from the faculties of the soul; nor is any thing necessary to the regular discharge of these inferior duties, beyond that rude observation which the most sluggish intellect may practise, and that industry which the stimulations of necessity naturally enforce.

Yet though the refusal of statues and panegyrick to those who employ only their hands and feet in the service of mankind may be easily justified, I am far from intending to incite the petulance of pride, to justify the superciliousness of grandeur, or to intercept any part of that tenderness and benevolence, which, by the privilege of their common nature, one man may claim from another.

That it would be neither wise nor equitable to discourage the husbandman, the labourer, the miner, or the smith, is generally granted; but there is another race of beings equally obscure and equally indigent, who, because their usefulness is less obvious to vulgar apprehensions, live unrewarded and die unpitied, and who have been long exposed to insult without a defender, and to censure without any apologist.

The authors of London were formerly computed by Swift at several thousands, and there is not any reason for suspecting that their num-

ber has decreased. Of these only a very few can be said to produce, or endeavour to produce new ideas, to extend any principle of science, or gratify the imagination with any uncommon train of images or contexture of events; the rest, however laborious, however arrogant, can only be considered as the drudges of the pen, the manufacturers of literature, who have set up for authors, either with or without a regular initiation, and like other artificers, have no other care than to deliver their tale of wares at the stated time.

It has been formerly imagined that he who intends the entertainment or instruction of others, must feel in himself some peculiar impulse of genius; that he must watch the happy minute in which his natural fire is excited, in which his mind is elevated with nobler sentiments, enlightened with clearer views, and invigorated with stronger comprehension; that he must carefully select his thoughts and polish his expressions; and animate his efforts with the hope of raising a monument of learning, which neither time nor envy shall be able to destroy.

But the authors whom I am now endeavouring to recommend have been too long hackneyed in the ways of men to indulge the chimerical ambition of immortality; they have seldom any claim to the trade of writing, but that they have tried some other without success; they perceive no particular summons to composition, except the sound of the clock; they have no other rule than the law or the fashion for admitting their thoughts or *rejecting* them; and about the opinion of posterity *they have* little solicitude, for their productions are

seldom intended to remain in the world longer than a week.

That such authors are not to be rewarded with praise is evident, since nothing can be admired when it ceases to exist; but surely though they cannot aspire to honour, they may be exempted from ignominy, and adopted in that order of men which deserves our kindness, though not our reverence. These papers of the day, the *ephemeræ* of learning, have uses more adequate to the purposes of common life than more pompous and durable volumes. If it is necessary for every man to be more acquainted with his contemporaries than with past generations, and to rather know the events which may immediately effect his fortune or quiet, than the revolutions of ancient kingdoms, in which he has neither possessions nor expectations; if it be pleasing to hear of the preferment and dismission of statesmen, the birth of heirs and the marriage of beauties, the humble author of journals and gazettes must be considered as a liberal dispenser of beneficial knowledge.

Even the abridger, compiler, and translator, though their labours cannot be ranked with those of the diurnal historiographer, yet must not be rashly doomed to annihilation. Every size of readers requires a genius of correspondent capacity; some delight in abstracts and epitomes, because they want room in their memory for long details, and content themselves with effects, without inquiry after causes; some minds are overpowered by splendour of sentiment, as some eyes are offended by a glaring light; such will gladly

contemplate an author in an humble imitation, as we look without pain upon the sun in the water.

As every writer has his use, every writer ought to have his patrons; and since no man, however high he now may stand, can be certain that he shall not be soon thrown down from his elevation by criticism or caprice, the common interest of learning requires that her sons should cease from intestine hostilities, and instead of sacrificing each other to malice and contempt, endeavour to avert persecution from the meanest of their fraternity.

N° 146. SATURDAY, AUGUST 10, 1751.

Sunt illic duo, tresve, qui revolvant
Nostrarum tineas ineptiarum:
Sed cum sponsio, fabulæque lassae
De scorpo fuerint et incitato.

MART.

'Tis possible that one or two
These fooleries of mine may view:
But then the bettings must be o'er,
Nor Cab or Childers talk'd of more.

F. LEWIS.

NONE of the projects or designs which exercise the mind of man are equally subject to obstructions and disappointments with the pursuit *of fame.* Riches cannot easily be denied to them *who have* something of greater value to offer in

exchange; he whose fortune is endangered by litigation, will not refuse to augment the wealth of the lawyer; he whose days are darkened by languor, or whose nerves are excruciated by pain, is compelled to pay tribute to the science of healing. But praise may be always omitted without inconvenience. When once a man has made celebrity necessary to his happiness, he has put it in the power of the weakest and most timorous malignity, if not to take away his satisfaction, at least to withhold it. His enemies may indulge their pride by airy negligence, and gratify their malice by quiet neutrality. They that could never have injured a character by invectives, may combine to annihilate it by silence; as the women of Rome threatened to put an end to conquest and dominion, by supplying no children to the commonwealth.

When a writer has with long toil produced a work intended to burst upon mankind with unexpected lustre, and withdraw the attention of the learned world from every other controversy or inquiry, he is seldom contented to wait long without the enjoyment of his new praises. With an imagination full of his own importance, he walks out like a monarch in disguise, to learn the various opinions of his readers. Prepared to feast upon admiration, composed to encounter censures without emotion, and determined not to suffer his quiet to be injured by a sensibility too exquisite of praise or blame, but to laugh with equal contempt at vain objections and injudicious commendations, he enters the places of mingled conversation, sits down to his tea in an obscure corner, and while he

appears to examine a file of antiquated journals' catches the conversation of the whole room. He listens but hears no mention of his book, and therefore supposes that he has disappointed his curiosity by delay; and that as men of learning would naturally begin their conversation with such a wonderful novelty, they had digressed to other subjects before his arrival. The company disperses, and their places are supplied by others equally ignorant, or equally careless. The same expectation hurries him to another place, from which the same disappointment soon drives him away. His impatience then grows violent and tumultuous; he ranges over the town with restless curiosity, and hears in one quarter of a cricket match, in another of a pick-pocket; is told by some of an unexpected bankruptcy, by others of a turtle feast; is sometimes provoked by importunate inquiries after the white bear, and sometimes with praises of the dancing dog: he is afterwards entreated to give his judgment upon a wager about the height of the Monument; invited to see a foot-race in the adjacent villages; desired to read a ludicrous advertisement; or consulted about the most effectual method of making inquiry after a favourite cat. The whole world is busied in affairs which he thinks below the notice of reasonable creatures, and which are nevertheless sufficient to withdraw all regard from his labours and his merits.

He resolves at last to violate his own modesty, and to recal the talkers from their folly by an inquiry after himself. He finds every one provided with an answer; one has seen the work advertised,

but never met with any that had read it; another has been so often imposed upon by specious titles, that he never buys a book till its character is established; a third wonders what any man can hope to produce after so many writers of greater eminence; the next has inquired after the author, but can hear no account of him, and therefore suspects the name to be fictitious; and another knows him to be a man condemned by indigence to write too frequently what he does not understand.

Many are the consolations with which the unhappy author endeavours to allay his vexation, and fortify his patience. He has written with too little indulgence to the understanding of common readers; he has fallen upon an age in which solid knowledge and delicate refinement have given way to low merriment and idle buffoonery, and therefore no writer can hope for distinction, who has any higher purpose than to raise laughter. He finds that his enemies, such as superiority will always raise, have been industrious, while his performance was in the press, to vilify and blast it; and that the bookseller, whom he had resolved to enrich, has rivals that obstruct the circulation of his copies. He at last reposes upon the consideration, that the noblest works of learning and genius have always made their way slowly against ignorance and prejudice; and that reputation, which is never to be lost, must be gradually obtained, as animals of longest life are observad not soon to attain their full stature and strength.

By such arts of voluntary delusion does every man *endeavour to* conceal his own unimportance

from himself. It is long before we are convinced of the small proportion which every individual bears to the collective body of mankind; or learn how few can be interested in the fortune of any single man; how little vacancy is left in the world for any new object of attention; to how small extent the brightest blaze of merit can be spread amidst the mists of business and of folly; and how soon it is clouded by the intervention of other novelties. Not only the writer of books, but the commander of armies, and the deliverer of nations, will easily outlive all noisy and popular reputation: he may be celebrated for a time by the publick voice, but his actions and his name will soon be considered as remote and unaffecting, and be rarely mentioned but by those whose alliance gives them some vanity to gratify by frequent commemoration.

It seems not to be sufficiently considered how little renown can be admitted in the world. Mankind are kept perpetually busy by their fears or desires, and have not more leisure from their own affairs, than to accquaint themselves with the accidents of the current day. Engaged in contriving some refuge from calamity, or in shortening the way to some new possession, they seldom suffer their thoughts to wander to the past or future; none but a few solitary students have leisure to inquire into the claims of ancient heroes or sages; and names which hoped to range over kingdoms and continents shrink at last into cloisters or colleges.

Nor is it certain that even of these dark and *narrow* habitations, these last retreats of fame, the *possession* will be long kept. Of men devoted to

literature very few extend their views beyond some particular science, and the greater part scledom inquire, even in their own profession, for any authors but those whom the present mode of study happens to force upon their notice; they desire not to fill their minds with unfashionable knowledge, but contentedly resign to oblivion those books which they now find censured or neglcted.

The hope of fame is necessarily connected with such considerations as must abate the ardour of confidence, and repress the vigour of pursuit. Whoever claims renown from any kind of excellence, expects to fill the place which is now possessed by another; for there are already names of every class sufficient to employ all that will desire to remember them; and surely he that is pushing his predecessors into the gulph of obscurity, cannot but sometimes suspect, that he must himself sink in like manner, and as he stands upon the same precipice, be swept away with the same violence.

It sometimes happens, that fame begins when life is at an end; but far the greater number of candidates for applause have owed their reception in the world to some favourable casualties, and have therefore immediately sunk into neglect, when death stripped them of their casual influence, and neither fortune nor patronage operated in their favour. Among those who have better claims to regard, the honour paid to their memory is commonly proportionate to the reputation which they enjoyed in their lives, though still growing fainter, as it is at a greater distance from the first emission; and *since it is so* difficult to obtain the notice of

contemporaries, how little is it to be hoped from future times? What can merit effect by its own force, when the help of art or friendship can scarcely support it?

N° 147. TUESDAY, AUGUST 13, 1751.

Tu nihil invita dices facieve Minerva.

HOR.

——You are of too quick a sight,
Not to discern which way your talent lies.

ROSCOM.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As little things grow great by continual accumulation, I hope you will not think the dignity of your character impaired by an account of a ludicrous persecution, which, though it produces no scenes of horror or of ruin, yet, by incessant importunity of vexation, wears away my happiness, and consumes those years which nature seems particularly to have assigned to cheerfulness in silent anxiety and helpless resentment.

I am the eldest son of a gentleman, who having inherited a large estate from his ancestors, and feeling no desire either to increase or lessen it, has from the time of his marriage generally resided at his own seat; where, by dividing his time among

the duties of a father, a master, and a magistrate, the study of literature, and the offices of civility, he finds means to rid himself of the day, without any of those amusements, which all those with whom my residence in this place has made me acquainted, think necessary to lighten the burden of existence.

When my age made me capable of instruction, my father prevailed upon a gentleman, long known at Oxford for the extent of his learning and purity of his manners, to undertake my education. The regard with which I saw him dreaded disposed me to consider his instructions as important; and I therefore soon formed a habit of attention, by which I made very quick advances in different kinds of learning, and, heard perhaps too often very flattering comparisons of my own proficiency with that of others, either less docile by nature or less happily forwarded by instruction. I was caressed by allthat exchanged visits with my father; and as young men are with little difficulty taught to judge favourably of themselves, began tothink that close application was no longer necessary, and that the time was now come when I was at liberty to read only for amusement, and was to receive the reward of my fatigues in praise and admiration.

While I was thus banqueting upon my own perfections, and longing in secret to escape from tutorage, my father's brother came from London to pass a summer at his native place. A lucrative employment which he possessed, and a fondness for the conversation and diversions of the gay part of mankind, had so long kept him from rural excur-

sions, that I had never seen him since my infancy. My curiosity was therefore strongly excited by the hope of observing a character more nearly, which I had hitherto reverenced only at a distance.

From all private and intimate conversation I was long witheld by the perpetual confluence of visitants, with whom the first news of my uncle's arrival crowded the house; but was amply recompensed by seeing an exact and punctilious practice of the arts of a courtier, in all the stratagems of endearment, the gradations of respect, and variations of courtesy. I remarked with what justice of distribution he divided his talk to a wide circle; with what address he offered to every man an occasion of indulging some favourite topick, or displaying some particular attainment; the judgment with which he regulated his inquiries after the absent; and the care with which he shewed all the companions of his early years how strongly they were enfixed in his memory, by the mention of past incidents, and the recital of puerile kindnesses, dangers, and frolicks. I soon discovered that he possessed some science of graciousness and attraction which books had not taught, and of which neither I nor my father had any knowledge; that he had the power of obliging those whom he did not benefit, that he diffused, upon his cursory behaviour and most trifling actions, a gloss of softness and delicacy by which every one was dazzled; and that by some occult method of captivation, he animated the timorous, softened the supercilious, and opened the reserved. I could not but repine at *the inelegance* of my own manners which left me *no hopes* but not to offend, and at the inefficacy

of rustick benevolence which gained no friends but by real service.

My uncle saw the veneration with which I caught every accent of his voice, and watched every motion of his hand; and the awkward diligence with which I endeavoured to imitate his embraces of fondness, and his bow of respect. He was, like others, easily flattered by an imitator by whom he could not fear ever to be rivalled, and repaid my assiduities with compliments and professions. Our fondness was so increased by a mutual endeavour to please each other, that when he returned to London, he declared himself unable to leave a nephew so amiable and so accomplished behind him; and obtained my father's permission to enjoy my company for a few months, by a promise to initiate me in the arts of politeness, and introduce me into publick life.

The courtier had little inclination to fatigue, and therefore, by travelling very slowly, afforded me time for more loose and familiar conversation; but I soon found, that by a few inquiries which he was not well prepared to satisfy, I had made him weary of his young companion. His element was a mixed assembly, where ceremony and healths, compliments and common topicks, kept the tongue employed with very little assistance from memory or reflection; but in the chariot, where he was necessitated to support a regular tenour of conversation, without any relief from a new comer, or any power of starting into gay digressions, or destroying argument by a jest, he soon discovered that poverty of ideas which had been hitherto concealed under the tinsel of politeness. The first

day he entertained me with the novelties and wonders with which I should be astonished at my entrance into London, and cautioned me with apparent admiration of his own wisdom against the arts by which rusticity is frequently deluded. The same detail and the same advice he would have repeated on the second day; but as I every moment diverted the discourse to the history of the towns by which we passed, or some other subject of learning or of reason, he soon lost his vivacity, grew peevish and silent, wrapped his cloak about him, composed himself to slumber, and reserved his gaiety for fitter auditors.

At length I entered London, and my uncle was reinstated in his superiority. He awaked at once to loquacity as soon as our wheels rattled on the pavement, and told me the name of every street as we crossed it, and owner of every house as we passed by. He presented me to my aunt, a lady of great eminence for the number of her acquaintances and splendour of her assemblies; and either in kindness or revenge consulted with her, in my presence, how I might be most advantageously dressed for my first appearance, and most expeditiously disencumbered from my villatick bashfulness. My indignation at familiarity thus contemptuous flushed in my face; they mistook anger for shame, and alternately exerted their eloquence upon the benefits of publick education and the happiness of an assurance early acquired.

Assurance is indeed the only qualification to which they seem to have annexed merit, and assur*ance* therefore is perpetually recommended to me

as the supply of every defect, and the ornament of every excellence. I never sit silent in company when secret history is circulating, but I am reproached for want of assurance. If I fail to return the stated answer to a compliment; if I am disconcerted by unexpected raillery; if I blush when I am discovered gazing on a beauty, or hesitate when I find myself embarrassed in an argument; if I am unwilling to talk of what I do not understand, or timorous in undertaking offices which I cannot gracefully perform; if I suffer a more lively tatler to recount the casualties of a game, or a nimbler fop to pick up a fan, I am censured between pity and contempt, as a wretch doomed to grovel in obscurity for want of assurance.

I have found many young persons harassed in the same manner, by those to whom age has given nothing but the assurance which they recommend; and therefore cannot but think it useful to inform them, that cowardice and delicacy are not to be confounded; and that he whose stupidity has armed him against the shafts of ridicule, will always act and speak with greater audacity, than they whose sensibility represses their ardour, and who dare never let their confidence outgrow their abilities.

N° 148. SATURDAY, AUGUST 17, 1751.

Me pater sævis oneret catenis
Quod viro clemens misero peperci,
Me vel extremis Numidarum in oris
Classe releget.

HOR.

Me let my father load with chains,
Or banish to Numidia's farthest plains!
My crime, that I a loyal wife,
In kind compassion spar'd my husband's life.

FRANCIS.

POLITICIANS remark, that no oppression is so heavy or lasting as that which is inflicted by the perversion and exorbitance of legal authority. The robber may be seized, and the invader repelled, whenever they are found; they who pretend no right but that of force, may by force be punished or suppressed. But when plunder bears the name of impost, and murder is perpetrated by a judicial sentence, fortitude is intimidated, and wisdom confounded; resistance shrinks from an alliance with rebellion, and the villain remains secure in the robes of the magistrate.

Equally dangerous and equally detestable are the cruelties often exercised in private families, under the venerable sanction of parental authority; the power which we are taught to honour from the first moments of reason; which is guarded from insult and violation by all that can impress awe upon the mind of man; and which therefore may wanton in cruelty without controul, and

trample the bounds of right with innumerable transgressions, before duty and piety will dare to seek redress, or think themselves at liberty to recur to any other means of deliverance than supplications by which insolence is elated, and tears by which cruelty is gratified.

It was for a long time imagined by the Romans, that no son could be the murderer of his father; and they had therefore no punishment appropriated to parricide. They seem likewise to have believed with equal confidence, that no father could be cruel to his child; and therefore they allowed every man the supreme judicature in his own house, and put the lives of his offspring into his hands. But experience informed them by degrees, that they had determined too hastily in favour of human nature; they found that instinct and habit were not able to contend with avarice or malice; that the nearest relation might be violated; and that power, to whomsoever intrusted, may be ill employed. They were therefore obliged to supply and to change their institutions; to deter the parricide by a new law, and to transfer capital punishments from the parent to the magistrate.

There are indeed many houses which it is impossible to enter familiarly, without discovering that parents are by no means exempt from the intoxication of dominion; and that he who is in no danger of hearing remonstrances but from his own conscience, will seldom be long without the art of controlling his convictions, and modifying justice by his own will.

If in any situation the heart were inaccessible to malignity, it might be supposed to be sufficiently secured by parental relation. To have voluntarily become to any being the occasion of its existence, produces an obligation to make that existence happy. To see helpless infancy stretching out her hands, and pouring out her cries in testimony of dependence, without any powers to alarm jealousy, or any guilt to alienate affection, must surely awaken tenderness in every human mind; and tenderness once excited will be hourly increased by the natural contagion of felicity, by the repercussion of communicated pleasure, by the consciousness of the dignity of benefaction. I believe no generous or benevolent man can see the vilest animal courting his regard, and shrinking at his anger, playing his gambols of delight before him, calling on him, in distress, and flying to him in danger, without more kindness than he can persuade himself to feel for the wild and unsocial inhabitants of the air and water. We naturally endear to ourselves those to whom we impart any kind of pleasure, because we imagine their affection and esteem secured to us by the benefits which they receive.

There is indeed another method by which the pride of superiority may be likewise gratified. He that has extinguished all the sensations of humanity, and has no longer any satisfaction in the reflection that he is loved as the distributor of happiness, may please himself with exciting terror as the inflictor of pain; he may delight his solitude *with con*templating the extent of his power and *the force* of his commands, in imagining the de-

sires that flutter on the tongue which is forbidden to utter them, or the discontent which preys on the heart in which fear confines it; he may amuse himself with new contrivances of detection, multiplications of prohibition, and varieties of punishment; and swell with exultation when he considers how little of the homage that he receives he owes to choice.

That princes of this character have been known, the history of all absolute kingdoms will inform us; and since, as Aristotle observes, *ἡ οἰκονομικὴ μοναρχία, the government of a family is naturally monarchial*, it is like other monarchies too often arbitrarily administered. The regal and parental tyrant differ only in the extent of their dominions, and the number of their slaves. The same passions cause the same miseries; except that seldom any prince, however despotick, has so far shaken off all awe of the publick eye, as to venture upon those freaks of injustice, which are sometimes indulged under the secrecy of a private dwelling. Capricious injunctions, partial decisions, unequal allotments, distributions of reward not by merit but by fancy, and punishments regulated not by the degree of the offence, but by the humour of the judge, are too frequent where no power is known but that of a father.

That he delights in the misery of others no man will confess, and yet what other motive can make a father cruel! The king may be instigated by one man to the destruction of another; he may sometimes think himself endangered by the virtues of a subject; he may dread the successful general or the popular orator; his avarice may point out

golden confiscations; and his guilt may whisper that he can only be secure by cutting off all power of revenge.

But what can a parent hope from the oppression of those who were born to his protection, of those who can disturb him with no competition, who can enrich him with no spoils? Why cowards are cruel may be easily discovered; but for what reason, not more infamous than cowardice, can that man delight in oppression who has nothing to fear?

The unjustifiable severity of a parent is loaded with this aggravation, that those whom he injures are always in his sight. The injustice of a prince is often exercised upon those of whom he never had any personal or particular knowledge; and the sentence which he pronounces, whether of banishment, imprisonment, or death, removes from his view the man whom he condemns. But the domestick oppressor dooms himself to gaze upon those faces which he clouds with terror and with sorrow; and beholds every moment the effects of his own barbarities. He that can bear to give continual pain to those who sorround him, and can walk with satisfaction in the gloom of his own presence; he that can see submissive misery without relenting, and meet without emotion the eye that implores mercy, or demands justice, will scarcely be amended by remonstrance or admonition; he has found means of stopping the avenues of tenderness, and arming his heart against the force of reason.

Even though no consideration should be paid to *the* great law of social beings, by which every

individual is commanded to consult the happiness of others, yet the harsh parent is less to be vindicated than any other criminal, because he less provides for the happiness of himself. Every man, however little he loves others, would willingly be loved; every man hopes to live long, and therefore hopes for that time at which he shall sink back to imbecility, and must depend for ease and cheerfulness upon the officiousness of others. But how has he obviated the inconveniencies of old age, who alienates from him the assistance of his children, and whose bed must be surrounded in his last hours, in the hours of languor and dejection, of impatience and pain, by strangers to whom his life is indifferent, or by enemies to whom his death is desirable?

Piety will indeed in good minds overcome provocation, and those who have been harassed by brutality will forget the injuries which they have suffered, so far as to perform the last duties with alacrity and zeal. But surely no resentment can be equally painful with kindness thus undeserved, nor can severer punishment be imprecated upon a man not wholly lost in meanness and stupidity, than through the tediousness of decrepitude, to be reproached by the kindness of his own children, to receive not the tribute but the alms of attendance, and to owe every relief of his miseries, not to gratitude, but to mercy.

N° 149. TUESDAY, AUGUST 20, 1751.

Quod non sit Pylades hoc tempore, non sit Orestes
Miraris? Pylades, Marce, bibebat idem.
Nec melior panis, turdusve dabatur Oresti:
Sed par, atque eadem cœna duobus erat.——
Te Cadmæa Tyros, me pinguis Gallia vestit:
Vis te purpureum, Marce, sagatus amem?
Ut præstem Pyladen, aliquis mihi præstet Orestem:
Hoc non sit verbis: Marce, ut ameris, ama.

You wonder now that no man sees
Such friends as those of ancient Greece.
Here lay the point——Orestes' meat
Was just the same his friend did eat;
Nor can it yet be found, his wine
Was better, Pylades, than thine.
In home-spun russet I am drest,
Your cloth is always of the best;
But, honest Marcus, if you please
To chuse me for your Pylades,
Remember words alone are vain;
Love——if you wou'd be lov'd again.

F. LEWIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

No depravity of the mind has been more frequently or justly censured than ingratitude. There is indeed sufficient reason for looking on those that can return evil for good, and repay kindness and assistance with hatred or neglect, as corrupted beyond the common degrees of wickedness; nor will he, who has once been clearly de-

tected in acts of injury to his benefactor, deserve to be numbered among social beings; he has endeavoured to destroy confidence, to intercept sympathy, and to turn every man's attention wholly on himself.

There is always danger lest the honest abhorrence of a crime should raise the passions with too much violence against the man to whom it is imputed. In proportion as guilt is more enormous, it ought to be ascertained by stronger evidence. The charge against ingratitude is very general; almost every man can tell what favours he has conferred upon insensibility, and how much happiness he has bestowed without return; but perhaps, if those patrons and protectors were confronted with any whom they boast of having befriended, it would often appear that they consulted only their pleasure or vanity, and repaid themselves their petty donatives by gratifications of insolence and indulgence of contempt.

It has happened that much of my time has been passed in a dependent state, and consequently I have received many favours in the opinion of those at whose expence I have been maintained; yet I do not feel in my heart any burning gratitude or tumultuous affection; and, as I would not willingly suppose myself less susceptible of virtuous passions than the rest of mankind, I shall lay the history of my life before you, that you may, by your judgment of my conduct, either reform or confirm my present sentiments.

My father was the second son of a very ancient and wealthy family. He married a lady of equal birth, whose fortune, joined to his own, might

have supported his posterity in honour; but being gay and ambitious, he prevailed on his friends to procure him a post, which gave him on opportunity of displaying his elegance and politeness. My mother was equally pleased with splendour, and equally careless of expence; they both justified their profusion to themselves, by endeavouring to believe it necessary to the extension of their acquaintance, and improvement of their interest; and whenever any place became vacant, they expected to be repaid. In the midst of these hopes my father was snatched away by an apoplexy; and my mother, who had no pleasure but in dress, equipage, assemblies, and compliments, finding that she could live no longer in her accustomed rank, sunk into dejection, and in two years wore out her life with envy and discontent.

I was sent with a sister, one year younger than myself, to the elder brother of my father. We were not yet capable of observing how much fortune influences affection, but flattered ourselves on the road with the tenderness and regard with which we should be treated by our uncle. Our reception was rather frigid than malignant; we were introduced to our young cousins, and for the first month more frequently consoled than upbraided, but in a short time we found our prattle repressed, our dress neglected, our endearments unregarded, and our requests referred to the housekeeper.

The forms of decency were now violated, and every day produced new insults. We were soon brought to the necessity of receding from our imagined equality with our cousins, to whom we sunk into humble companions, without choice or influ-

ence, expected only to echo their opinions, facilitate their desires, and accompany their rambles. It was unfortunate that our early introduction into polite company, and habitual knowledge of the arts of civility, had given us such an appearance of superiority to the awkward bashfulness of our relations, as naturally drew respect and preference from every stranger; and my aunt was forced to assert the dignity of her own children while they were sculking in corners for fear of notice, and hanging down their heads in silent confusion, by relating the indiscretion of our father, displaying her own kindness, lamenting the misery of birth without estate, and declaring her anxiety for our future provision, and the expedients which she had formed to secure us from the follies or crimes, to which the conjunction of pride and want often gives occasion. In a short time care was taken to prevent such vexatious mistakes; we were told, that fine clothes would only fill our heads with false expectations, and our dress was therefore accommodated to our fortune.

Childhood is not easily dejected or mortified. We felt no lasting pain from insolence or neglect; but finding that we were favoured and commended by all whose interest did not prompt them to discountenance us, preserved our vivacity and spirit to years of greater sensibility. It then became irksome and disgusting to live without any principle of action but the will of another, and we often met privately in the garden to lament our condition, and to ease our hearts with mutual narratives of caprice, peevishness, and affront.

There are innumerable modes of insult and tokens of contempt, for which it is not so easy to find a name, which vanish to nothing in an attempt to describe them, and yet may, by continual repetition, make day pass after day in sorrow and in terror. Phrases of cursory compliment and established salutation may, by a different modulation of the voice, or cast of the countenance, convey contrary meanings, and be changed from indications of respect to expressions of scorn. The dependent who cultivates delicacy in himself very little consults his own tranquillity. My unhappy vigilance is every moment discovering some petulance of accent or arrogance of mien, some vehemence of interrogation or quickness of reply, that recals my poverty to my mind, and which I feel more acutely as I know not how to resent it.

You are not however to imagine, that I think myself discharged from the duties of gratitude, only because my relations do not adjust their looks, or tune their voices to my expectation. The insolence of benefaction terminates not in negative rudeness or obliquities of insult. I am often told in express terms of the miseries from which charity has snatched me, while multitudes are suffered by relations equally near to devolve upon the parish; and have more than once heard it numbered among other favours, that I am admitted to the same table with my cousins.

That I sit at the first table I must acknowledge, but I sit there only that I may feel the stings of inferiority. My inquiries are neglected, my opinion is overborne, my assertions are controverted; and as insolence always propagates itself, the

servants overlook me in imitation of their master: if I call modestly, I am not heard; if loudly, my usurpation of authority is checked by a general frown. I am often obliged to look uninvited upon delicacies, and sometimes desired to rise upon very slight pretences.

The incivilities to which I am exposed would give me less pain, were they not aggravated by the tears of my sister, whom the young ladies are hourly tormenting with every art of feminine persecution. As it is said of the supreme magistrate of Venice, that he is a prince in one place and a slave in another, my sister is a servant to her cousins in their apartments, and a cómpanion only at the table. Her wit and beauty draw so much regard away from them, that they never suffer her to appear with them in any place where they solicit notice or expect admiration; and when they are visited by neighbouring ladies and pass their hours in domestick amusements, she is sometimes called to fill a vacancy, insulted with contemptuous freedoms, and dismissed to her needle when her place is supplied. The heir has of late, by the instigation of his sisters, begun to harass her with clownish jocularity; he seems inclined to make his first rude essays of waggery upon her: and by the connivance, if not encouragement of his father, treats her with such licentious brutality as I cannot bear, though I cannot punish it.

I beg to be informed, Mr Rambler, how much we can be supposed to owe to beneficence, exerted on terms like these? to beneficence which pollutes its gifts with contumely, and may be truly said to pander *to pride*? I would willingly be told,

whether insolence does not reward its own liberalities, and whether he that exacts servility can with justice at the same time expect affection?

I am, SIR, &c.

HYPERDULUS.

N° 150. SATURDAY, AUGUST 24, 1751.

O munera nondum
Intellecta Deum!

LUCAN.

——Thou chiefest good!
Bestow'd by Heav'n, but seldom understood

ROWE.

As daily experience makes it evident that misfortunes are unavoidably incident to human life, that calamity will neither be repelled by fortitude, nor escaped by flight; neither awed by greatness, nor eluded by obscurity; philosophers have endeavoured to reconcile us to that condition which they cannot teach us to mend, by persuading us that most of our evils are made afflictive only by ignorance or perverseness, and that nature has annexed to every vicissitude of external circumstances, some advantage sufficient to overbalance all its inconveniences.

This attempt may perhaps be justly suspected of resemblance to the practice of physicians, who, when they cannot mitigate pain, destroy sensibility,

and endeavour to conceal by opiates the inefficacy of their other medicines. The panegyrists of calamity have more frequently gained applause to their wit, than acquiescence to their arguments; nor has it appeared that the most musical oratory or subtle ratiocination has been able long to overpower the anguish of oppression, the tediousness of languor, or the longings of want.

Yet it may be generally remarked, that where much has been attempted, something has been performed; though the discoveries or acquisitions of man are not always adequate to the expectations of his pride, they are at least sufficient to animate his industry. The antidotes with which philosophy has medicated the cup of life, though they cannot give it salubrity and sweetness, have at least allayed its bitterness and contempered its malignity; the balm which she drops upon the wounds of the mind abates their pain, though it cannot heal them.

By suffering willingly what we cannot avoid, we secure ourselves from vain and immoderate disquiet; we preserve for better purposes that strength which would be profitably wasted in wild efforts of desperation, and maintain that circumspection which may enable us to seize every support, and improve every elevation. This calmness will be more easily obtained, as the attention is more powerfully withdrawn from the contemplation of unmingled, unabated evil, and diverted to those accidental benefits which prudence may confer on every state.

Seneca has attempted not only to pacify us in misfortune, but almost to allure us to it by representing it as necessary to the pleasures of the mind. *He that never was acquainted* with adversity, says

he, *has seen the world but on one side, and is ignorant of half the scenes of nature.* He invites his pupil to calamity, as the Syrens allured the passenger to their coasts, by promising that he shall return πλείονα εἰδώς, with increase of knowledge, with enlarged views, and multiplied ideas.

Curiosity is, in great and generous minds, the first passion and the last; and perhaps always predominates in proportion to the strength of the contemplative faculties. He who easily comprehends all that is before him, and soon exhausts any single subject, is always eager for new inquiries; and in proportion as the intellectual eye takes in a wider prospect, it must be gratified with variety by more rapid flights and bolder excursions; nor perhaps can there be proposed to those who have been accustomed to the pleasures of thought, a more powerful incitement to any undertaking, than the hope of filling their fancy with new images, of clearing their doubts, and enlightening their reason.

When Jason, in Valerius Flaccus, would incline the young prince Acastus to accompany him in the first essay of navigation, he disperses his apprehensions of danger by representations of the new tracks of earth and heaven which the expedition would spread before their eyes; and tells him with what grief he will hear, at their return, of the countries which they shall have seen, and the toils which they have surmounted.

O quantum terræ, quantum cognoscere cœli,
Permissum est! pelagus quantas aperimus in usus!
Nunc forsan grave reris opus: sed læta recurret
Cum ratis, & caram cum jam mihi reddet Iolcon;
Quis pudor heu nostros tibi tunc audire labores!
Quam referam visas tua per ludibria gentes!

Led by our stars, what tracks immense we trace!
From seas remote, what funds of science raise!
A pain to thought! but when th' heroick band
Returns applauded to their native land,
A life domestick you will then deplore,
And sigh, while I describe the various shore.

EDW. CAVE.

Acastus was soon prevailed upon by his curiosity o set rocks and hardship at defiance, and commit iis life to the winds; and the same motives have n all ages had the same effect upon those whom the lesire of fame or wisdom has distinguished from the ower orders of mankind.

If therefore it can be proved that distress is neces- ary to the attainment of knowledge, and that a iappy situation hides from us so large a part of the ield of meditation, the envy of many who repine it the sight of affluence and splendour will be much liminished; for such is the delight of mental supe- iority, that none on whom nature or study have :onferred it, would purchase the gifts of fortune by ts loss.

It is certain, that however the rhetorick of Seneca may have dressed adversity with extrinsick ornaments, he has justly represented it as affording ome opportunities of observation, which cannot be found in continual success; he has truly asserted, that to escape misfortune is to want instruction, and that to live at ease is to live in ignorance.

As no man can enjoy happiness without think- ng that he enjoys it, the experience of calamity is necessary to a just sense of better fortune; for the good of our present state is merely comparative,

and the evil which every man feels will be sufficient to disturb and harass him, if he does not know how much he escapes. The lustre of diamonds is invigorated by the interposition of darker bodies; the lights of a picture are created by the shades. The highest pleasure which nature has indulged to sensitive perception, is that of rest after fatigue; yet that state which labour heightens into delight, is of itself only ease, and is incapable of satisfying the mind without the superaddition of diversified amusements.

Prosperity, as is truly asserted by Seneca, very much obstructs the knowledge of ourselves. No man can form a just estimate of his own powers by unactive speculation. That fortitude which has surmounted no difficulties, that integrity which has encountered no dangers, that prudence which has been attacked by no temptations, can at best be considered but as gold not yet brought to the test, of which therefore the true value cannot be assigned. *He that traverses the lists without an adversary, may receive,* says the philosopher, *the reward of victory, but he has no pretensions to the honour.* If it be the highest happiness of man to contemplate himself with satisfaction, and to receive the gratulations of his own conscience, he whose courage has made way amidst the turbulence of opposition, and whose vigour has broken through the snares of distress, has many advantages over those that have slept in the shades of indolence, and whose retrospect of time can entertain them with nothing but day rising upon day, and year gliding after year.

Equally necessary is some variety of fortune to a nearer inspection of the manners, principles, and affections of mankind. Princes, when they would

know the opinions or grievances of their subjects, find it necessary to steal away from guards and attendants, and mingle on equal terms among the people. To him who is known to have the power of doing good or harm, nothing is shewn in its natural form. The behaviour of all that approach him is regulated by his humour, their narratives are adapted to his inclination, and their reasonings determined by his opinions; whatever can alarm suspicion, or excite resentment, is carefully suppressed, and nothing appears but uniformity of sentiments and ardour of affection. It may be observed, that the unvaried complaisance which ladies have the right of exacting, keeps them generally unskilled in human nature; prosperity will always enjoy the female prerogatives, and therefore must be always in danger of female ignorance. Truth is scarcely to be heard, but by those from whom it can serve no interest to conceal it.

N° 151. TUESDAY, AUGUST 17, 1751.

Ἀμφὶ δ' ἀνδρὶ---
πᾶν φέρεται μαχλαῖσι
ἀναβύμιοι κριμναῖαι
τοῦτο δ' ἀμήχανον ἰσχεῖν
Ὅτι νυν, καὶ ἐν τέλειν-
τα φίτατον ἀνδρὶ τυχεῖν

PIND.

But wrapt in error is the human mind,
And human bliss is ever insecure:
Know we what fortune yet remains behind?
Know we how long the present shall endure?

WEST.

THE writers of medicine and physiology have traced, with great appearance of accuracy, the effects of time upon the human body, by marking the various periods of the constitution, and the several stages by which animal life makes its progress from infancy to decrepitude. Though their observations have not enabled them to discover how manhood may be accelerated, or old age retarded, yet surely, if they be considered only as the amusement of curiosity, they are of equal importance with conjectures on things more remote, with catalogues of the fixed stars, and calculations of the bulk of planets.

It had been a task worthy of the moral philosophers to have considered with equal care the climactericks of the mind; to have pointed out the *time* at which every passion begins and ceases to

predominate, and noted the regular variations of desire, and the succession of one appetite to another.

The periods of mental change are not to be stated with equal certainty: our bodies grow up under the care of nature, and depend so little on our own management, that something more than negligence is necessary to discompose their structure or impede their vigour. But our minds are committed in a great measure first to the direction of others, and afterwards of ourselves. It would be difficult to protract the weakness of infancy beyond the usual time, but the mind may be very easily hindered from its share of improvement, and the bulk and strength of manhood must, without the assistance of education and instruction, be informed only with the understanding of a child.

Yet amidst all the disorder and inequality which variety of discipline, example, conversation, and employment, produce in the intellectual advances of different men, there is still discovered by a vigilant spectator, such a general and remote similitude, as may be expected in the same common nature affected by external circumstances indefinitely varied. We all enter the world in equal ignorance, gaze round about us on the same objects, and have our first pains and pleasures, our first hopes and fears, our first aversions and desires, from the same causes; and though, as we proceed farther, life opens wider prospects to our view, and accidental impulses determine us to different paths, yet as every mind, however vigorous or abstracted, is necessitated, in its present state of union, to receive its *informations*, and execute its purposes, by the

intervention of the body, the uniformity of our corporeal nature communicates itself to our intellectual operations; and those whose abilities or knowledge incline them most to deviate from the general round of life, are recalled from eccentricity by the laws of their existence.

If we consider the exercises of the mind, it will be found that in each part of life some particular faculty is more eminently employed. When the treasures of knowledge are first opened before us, while novelty blooms alike on either hand, and every thing equally unknown and unexamined seems of equal value, the power of the soul is principally exerted in a vivacious and desultory curiosity. She applies by turns to every object, enjoys it for a short time, and flies with equal ardour to another. She delights to catch up loose and unconnected ideas, but starts away from systems and complications which would obstruct the rapidity of her transitions, and detain her long in the same pursuit.

When a number of distinct images are collected by these erratick and hasty surveys, the fancy is busied in arranging them; and combines them into pleasing pictures, with more resemblance to the realities of life as experience advances, and new observations rectify the former. While the judgment is yet uninformed and unable to compare the draughts of fiction with their originals, we are delighted with improbable adventures, impracticable virtues, and inimitable characters: but in proportion as we have more opportunities of acquainting *ourselves* with living nature, we are sooner disgusted *with* copies in which there appears no resem-

blance. We first discard absurdity and impossibility, then exact greater and greater degrees of probability, but at last become cold and insensible to the charms of falsehood, however specious, and from the imitations of truth, which are never perfect, transfer our affection to truth itself.

Now commences the reign of judgment or reason; we begin to find little pleasure but in comparing arguments, stating propositions, disentangling perplexities, clearing ambiguities, and deducing consequences. The painted vales of imagination are deserted, and our intellectual activity is exercised in winding through the labyrinths of fallacy, and toiling with firm and cautious steps up the narrow tracks of demonstration. Whatever may lull vigilance, or mislead attention, is contemptuously rejected, and every disguise in which error may be concealed is carefully observed, till by degrees a certain number of incontestable or unsuspected propositions are established, and at last concatenated into arguments, or compacted into systems.

At length weariness succeeds to labour, and the mind lies at ease, in the contemplation of her own attainments, without any desire of new conquests or excursions. This is the age of recollection and narrative; the opinions are settled, and the avenues of apprehension shut against any new intelligence; the days that are to follow must pass in the inculcation of precepts already collected, and assertion of tenets already received; nothing is henceforward so odious as opposition, so insolent as doubt, or so dangerous as novelty.

In like manner the passions usurp the separate

life, we have always about us sufficient gra
tions: the sunshine quickens us to play, an
shade invites us to sleep.

But we soon become unsatisfied with ne
felicity, and are solicited by our senses and
tites to more powerful delights, as the taste o
who has satisfied his hunger must be excite
artificial stimulations. The simplicity of n
amusement is now past, and art and contri
must improve our pleasures; but in time,
like nature, is exhausted, and the senses ca
longer supply the cravings of the intellect.

The attention is then transferred from ple
to interest, in which pleasure is perhaps incl
though diffused to a wider extent, and protr
through new gradations. Nothing now d
before the eyes but wealth and power, nor
in the ear but the voice of fame; wealth
which, however variously denominated, every

every motion is referred to some distant end; the accomplishment of one design begins another, and the ultimate wish is always pushed off to its former distance.

At length fame is observed to be uncertain, and power to be dangerous; the man whose vigour and alacrity begin to forsake him, by degrees contracts his designs, remits his former multiplicity of pursuits, and extends no longer his regard to any other honour than the reputation of wealth, or any other influence than his power. Avarice is generally the last passion of those lives of which the first part has been squandered in pleasure, and the second devoted to ambition. He that sinks under the fatigue of getting wealth, lulls his age with the milder business of saving it.

I have in this view of life considered men as actuated only by natural desires, and yielding to their own inclinations, without regard to superior principles by which the force of external agents may be counteracted, and the temporary prevalence of passions restrained. Nature will indeed always operate, human desires will be always ranging; but these motions, though very powerful, are not resistless; nature may be regulated, and desires governed; and to contend with the predominance of succeseive passions, to be endangered first by one affection, and then by another, is the condition upon which we are to pass our time, the time of our preparation for that state which shall put an end to experiment, to disappointment, and to change.

N° 152. SATURDAY, AUGUST 31, 1751.

Tristia mœstum
Vultum verba decent, iratum plena minarum.
HOR.

Disastrous words can best disaster show;
n angry phrase the angry passions glow.
ELPHIN.

"IT was the wisdom," says, Seneca, "of an-
"cient times, to consider what is most useful
"as most illustrious." If this rule be applied to works of genius, scarcely any species of composition deserves more to be cultivated than the epistolary style, since none is of more various or frequent use, through the whole subordination of human life.

It has yet happened that, among the numerous writers which our nation has produced, equal perhaps always in force and genius, and of late in elegance and acuracy, to those of any other country, very few have endeavoured to distinguish themselves by the publication of letters, except such as were written in the discharge of publick trusts, and during the transaction of great affairs; which, though they afford precedents to the minister, and memorials to the historian, are of no use as examples of the familiar style, or models of private correspondence.

If it be inquired by foreigners how this deficiency has happened in the literature of a country, where all indulge themselves with so little danger in speaking and writing, may we not, without either *bigotry* or arrogance, inform them, that it must *be imputed* to our contempt of trifles, and our due

sense of the dignity of the publick? We do not think it reasonable to fill the world with volumes from which nothing can be learned, nor expect that the employments of the busy, or the amusements of the gay, should give way to narratives of our private affairs, complaints of absence, expressions of fondness, or declarations of fidelity.

A slight perusal of the innumerable letters by which the wits of France have signalized their names, will prove that other nations need not be discouraged from the like attempts by the consciousness of imability; for surely it is not very difficult to aggravate trifling misfortunes, to magnify familiar incidents, repeat adulatory professions, accumulate servile hyperboles, and produce all that can be found in the despicable remains of Voiture and Scarron.

Yet as much of life must be passed in affairs considerable only by their frequent occurrence, and much of the pleasure which our condition allows must be produced by giving elegance to trifles, it is necessary to learn how to become little without becoming mean, to maintain the necessary intercourse of civility, and fill up the vacuities of actions by agreeable appearances. It had therefore been of advantage, if such of our writers as have excelled in the art of decorating insignificance, had supplied us with a few sallies of innocent gaiety, effusions of honest tenderness, or exclamations of unimportant hurry.

Precept has generally been posterior to performance. The art of composing works of genius has never been taught but by the example of those who performed it by natural vigour of imagina-

tion, and rectitude of judgment. As we have few letters, we have likewise few criticisms upon the epistolary style. The observations with which Walsh has introduced his pages of inanity, are such as give him little claim to the rank assigned him by Dryden among the criticks. *Letters*, says he, *are intended as resemblances of conversation, & the chief excellencies of conversation are good humour and good breeding.* This remark, equally valuable for its novelty and propriety, he dilates and enforces with an appearance of complete acquiescence in his own discovery.

No man was ever in doubt about the moral qualities of a letter. It has been always known, that he who endeavours to please, must appear pleased; and he who would not provoke rudeness, must not practise it. But the question among those who establish rules for an epistolary performance is, how gaiety or civility may be properly expressed; as among the criticks in history, it is not contested whether truth ought to be preserved, but by what mode of diction it is best adorned.

As letters are written on all subjects, in all states of mind, they cannot be properly reduced to settled rules, or discribed by any single characteristick; and we may safely disentangle our minds from critical embarassments, by determining that a letter has no peculiarity but its form, and that nothing is to be refused admission which would be proper in any other method of treating the same subject. The qualities of the epistolary style most frequently required, are ease and simplicity, an even flow of unlaboured diction, and an artless arrangement of obvious sentiments. But these directions are no sooner applied to use, than their

scantiness and imperfection become evident. Letters are written to the great and to the mean, to the learned and the ignorant, at rest and in distress, in sport and in passion. Nothing can be more improper than ease and laxity of expression, when the importance of the subject impresses solicitude, or the dignity of the person exacts reverence.

That letters should be written with strict conformity to nature, is true, because nothing but conformity to nature can make any composition beautiful or just. But it is natural to depart from familiarity of language upon occasions not familiar. Whatever elevates the sentiments, will consequently raise the expression; whatever fills us with hope or terror, will produce some perturbation of images, and some figurative distortions of phrase. Whereever we are studious to please, we are afraid of trusting our first thoughts, and endeavour to recommend our opinion by studied ornaments, accuracy of method, and elegance of style.

If the personages of the comick scene be allowed by Horace to raise their language in the transports of anger to the turgid vehemence of tragedy, the epistolary writer may likewise without censure comply with the varieties of his matter. If great events are to be related, he may, with all the solemnity of an historian, deduce them from their causes, connect them with their concomitants, and trace them to their consequences. If a disputed position is to be established, or a remote principle to be investigated, he may detail his reasonings with all the nicety of syllogistick method. If a menace is to be averted, or a benefit implored, he *may, without* any violation of the edicts of criti-

cism, call every power of rhetorick to his assistance, and try every inlet at which love or pity enters the heart.

Letters that have no other end than the entertainment of the correspondents, are more properly regulated by critical precepts; because the matter and style are equally arbitrary, and rules are more necessary, as there is a larger power of choice. In letters of this kind, some conceive art graceful, and others think negligence amiable; some model them by the sonnet, and will allow them no means of delighting but the soft lapse of calm mellifluence; others adjust them by the epigram, and expect pointed sentences and forcible periods. The one party considers exemption from faults as the height of excellence, the other looks upon neglect of excellence as the most disgusting fault; one avoids censure, the other aspires to praise; one is always in danger of insipidity, the other continually on the brink of affectation.

When the subject has no intrinsick dignity, it must necessarily owe its attractions to artificial embellishments, and may catch at all advantages which the art of writing can supply. He that, like Pliny, sends his friend a portion for his daughter, will, without Pliny's eloquence or address, find means of exciting gratitude and securing acceptance; but he that has no present to make but a garland, a ribbon, or some petty curiosity, must endeavour to recommend it by his manner of giving it.

The purpose for which letters are written when *no* intelligence is communicated, or business transacted, *is* to preserve in the minds of the absent *either* love or esteem; to excite love we must im-

part pleasure, and to raise esteem we must discover abilities. Pleasure will generally be given, as abilities are displayed by scenes of imagery, points of conceit, unexpected sallies, and artful compliments. Trifles always require exuberance of ornament; the building which has no strength can be valued only for the grace of its decorations. The pebble must be polished with care, which hopes to be valued as a diamond; and words ought surely to be laboured, when they are intended to stand for things.

N° 153. TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 1751.

Turba remi sequitur fortunam, ut semper, et odit Damnatos.

JUV.

The fickle crowd with fortune comes and goes;
Wealth still finds followers, and misfortune foes.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THERE are occasions on which all apology is rudeness. He that has an unwelcome message to deliver, may give some proof of tenderness and delicacy, by a ceremonial introduction and gradual discovery, because the mind, upon which the weight of sorrow is to fall, gains time for the collection of its powers; but nothing is more absurd than to delay the communication of

pleasure, to torment curiosity by impatience, and to delude hope by anticipation,

I shall therefore forbear the arts by which correspondents generally secure admission, for I have too long remarked the power of vanity, to doubt that I shall be read by you with a disposition to approve, when I declare that my narrative has no other tendency than to illustrate and corroborate your own observations.

I was the second son of a gentleman, whose patrimony had been wasted by a long succession of squanderers, till he was unable to support any of his children, except his heir, in the hereditary dignity of idleness. Being therefore obliged to employ that part of my life in study which my progenitors had devoted to the hawk and the hound, I was in my eighteenth year dispatched to the university, without any rural honours. I had never killed a single woodcock, nor partaken one triumph over a conquered fox.

At the university I continued to enlarge my acquisitions with little envy of the noisy happiness which my elder brother had the fortune to enjoy; and having obtained my degree, retired to consider at leisure to what profession I should confine that application which had hitherto been dissipated in general knowledge. To deliberate upon a choice which custom and honour forbid to be retracted, is certainly reasonable, yet to let loose the attention equally to the advantages and inconveniences of every employment is not without danger; new motives are every moment operating on every side; *and mechanicks* have long ago discovered, that contrariety of equal attractions is equivalent to rest.

While I was thus trifling in uncertainty, an old adventurer, who had been once the intimate friend of my father, arrived from the Indies with a large fortune; which he had so much harrassed himself in obtaining, that sickness and infirmity left him no other desire than to die in his native country. His wealth easily procured him an invitation to pass his life with us, and being incapable of any amusement but conversation, he necessarily became familiarized to me, whom he found studious and domestick. Pleased with an opportunity of imparting my knowledge, and eager of any intelligence that might increase it, I delighted his curiosity with historical narratives and explications of nature, and gratified his vanity, by inquiries after the products of distant countries, and the customs of their inhabitants.

My brother saw how much I advanced in the favour of our guest, who being without heirs, was naturally expected to enrich the family of his friend, but neither attempted to alienate me, nor to ingratiate himself. He was indeed little qualified to solicit the affection of a traveller, for the remissness of his education had left him without any rule of action but his present humour. He often forsook the old gentleman in the midst of an adventure, because the horn sounded in the court-yard, and would have lost any opportunity, not only of knowing the history, but sharing the wealth of the Mogul, for the trial of a new pointer, or the sight of a horse-race.

It was therefore not long before our new friend declared his intention of bequeathing to me the

profits of his commerce, as the only man in the family by whom he could expect them to be rationally enjoyed. This distinction drew upon me the envy not only of my brother but my father.

As no man is willing to believe that he suffers by his own fault, they imputed the preference which I had obtained to adulatory complaisance or malignant calumnies. To no purpose did I call upon my patron to attest my innocence, for who will believe what he wishes to be false? In the heat of disappointment they forced their inmate by repeated insults to depart from the house, and I was soon, by the same treatment, obliged to follow him.

He chose his residence in the confines of London, where rest, tranquillity, and medicine, restored him to part of his health which he had lost. I pleased myself with perceiving that I was not likely to obtain an immediate possession of wealth which no labour of mine had contributed to acquire; and that he, who had thus distinguished me, might hope to end his life without a total frustration of those blessings, which whatever be their real value, he had sought with so much diligence, and purchased with so many vicissitudes of danger and fatigue.

He indeed left me no reason to repine at his recovery, for he was willing to accustom me early to the use of money, and set apart for my expences such a revenue as I had scarcely dared to image. I can yet congratulate myself that fortune has seen her golden cup once tasted without inebriation. Neither my modesty nor prudence were overwhelmed by affluence; my elevation was without insolence, and my expence without profusion.

Employing the influence which money always confers to the improvement of my understanding, I mingled in parties of gaiety and in conferences of learning, appeared in every place where instruction was to be found, and imagined that by ranging through all the diversities of life, I had acquainted myself fully with human nature, and learned all that was to be known of the ways of men.

It happened, however, that I soon discovered how much was wanted to the completion of my knowledge, and found that, according to Seneca's remark, I had hitherto seen the world but on one side. My patron's confidence in his increase of strength tempted him to carelessness and irregularity; he caught a fever by riding in the rain, of which he died delirious on the third day. I buried him without any of the heir's affected grief or secret exultation; then, preparing to take a legal possession of his fortune, opened his closet, where I found a will, made at his first arrival, by which my father was appointed the chief inheritor, and nothing was left me but a legacy sufficient to support me in the prosecution of my studies.

I had not yet found such charms in prosperity as to continue it by any acts of forgery or injustice, and made haste to inform my father of the riches which had been given him, not by the preference of kindness, but by the delays of indolence, and cowardice of age. The hungry family flew like vultures on their prey, and soon made my disappointment publick by the tumult of their claims and the splendour of their sorrow.

It was now my part to consider how I should *repair the* disappointment. I could not but tri

umph in my long list of friends, which comprised almost every name that power or knowledge intitled to eminence, and in the prospect of the innumerable roads to honour and preferment, which I had laid open to myself by the wise use of temporary riches. I believed nothing necessary but that I should continue that acquaintance to which I had been so readily admitted, and which had hitherto been cultivated on both sides with equal ardour.

Full of these expectations, I one morning ordered a chair, with an intention to make my usual circle of morning visits. Where I first stopped I saw two footmen lolling at the door, who told me, without any change of posture or collection of countenance, that their master was at home; and suffered me to open the inner door without assistance. I found my friend standing, and, as I was tattling with my former freedom, was formally intreated to sit down; but did not stay to be favoured with any further condescensions.

My next experiment was made at the levee of a statesman, who received me with an embrace of tenderness, that he might with more decency publish my change of fortune to the sycophants about him. After he had enjoyed the triumph of condolence, he turned to a wealthy stockjobber, and left me exposed to the scorn of those who had lately courted my notice, and solicited my interest.

I was then set down at the door of another, who upon my entrance advised me with great solemnity to think of some settled provision for life. I left him, and hurried away to an old friend, who *professed* himself unsusceptible of any impressions

from prosperity or misfortune, and begged that he might see me when he was more at leisure.

At sixty-seven doors at which I knocked in the first week after my appearance in a mourning dress, I was denied admission at forty-six; was suffered at fourteen to wait in the outer room till business was dispatched; at four was entertained with a few questions about the weather; at one heard the footman rated for bringing my name; and at two was informed, in the flow of casual conversation, how much a man of rank degrades himself by mean company.

My curiosity now led me to try what reception I should find among the ladies; but I found that my patron had carried all my powers of pleasing to the grave. I had formerly been celebrated as a wit, and not perceiving any languor in my imagination, I essayed to revive that gaiety which had hitherto broken out involuntarily before my sentences were finished. My remarks were now heard with a steady countenance, and if a girl happened to give way to habitual merriment, her forwardness was repressed with a frown by her mother or her aunt.

Wherever I come, I scatter infirmity and disease; every lady whom I meet in the Mall is too weary to walk; all whom I intreat to sing are troubled with colds; if I propose cards, they are afflicted with the head-ach; if I invite them to the gardens, they cannot bear a crowd.

All this might be endured; but there is a class of mortals who think my understanding impaired with my fortuue, exalt themselves to the dignity of advice, and whenever we happen to meet, pre-

sume to prescribe my conduct, regulate my economy, and direct my pursuits. Another race, equally impertinent and equally despicable, are every moment recommending me to an attention to my interest, and think themselves entitled, by superior prudence, to reproach me if I speak or move without regard to profit.

Such, Mr. Rambler, is the power of wealth, that it commands the ear of greatness and the eye of beauty, gives spirit to the dull and authority to the timorous, and leaves him from whom it departs, without virtue and without understanding, the sport of caprice, the scoff of insolence, the slave of meanness, and the pupil of ignorance.

I am, &c.

N° 154. SATURDAY, SEPT. 7, 1751.

——Tibi res antiquæ laudis et artis
Aggredior, sanctos ausus recludere fontes.

VIRG.

For thee my tuneful accents will I raise,
And treat of arts disclos'd in ancient days;
Once more unlock for thee the sacred spring.

DRYD.

THE direction of Aristotle to those that study politicks, is, first to examine and understand what has been written by the ancients upon government; then to cast their eyes round upon the world, and consider by what causes the prosperity

of communities is visibly influenced, and why some are worse, and others better administered.

The same method must be pursued by him who hopes to become eminent in any other part of knowledge. The first task is to search books, the next to contemplate nature. He must first possess himself of the intellectual treasures which the diligence of former ages has accumulated, and then endeavour to increase them by his own collections.

The mental disease of the present generation is impatience of study, contempt of the great masters of ancient wisdom, and a disposition to rely wholly upon unassisted genius and natural sagacity. The wits of these happy days have discovered a way to fame, which the dull caution of our laborious ancestors durst never attempt; they cut the knots of sophistry which it was formerly the business of years to untie, solve difficulties by sudden irradiations of intelligence, and comprehend long processes of argument by immediate intuition.

Men who have flattered themselves into this opinion of their own abilities, look down on all who waste their lives over books, as a race of inferior beings condemned by nature to perpetual pupillage, and fruitlessly endeavouring to remedy their barrenness by incessant cultivation, or succour their feebleness by subsidiary strength. They presume that none would be more industrious that they, if they were not more sensible of deficiencies; and readily conclude, that he who places no confidence in his own powers, owes his modesty only to his weakness.

It is however certain, that no estimate is more in danger of erroneous calculations than those by which a man computes the force of his own genius.

It generally happens at our entrance into the world, that by the natural attraction of similitude, we associate with men like ourselves, young, sprightly, and ignorant, and rate our accomplishments by comparison with theirs; when we have once obtained an acknowledged superiority over our acquaintances, imagination and desire easily extend it over the rest of mankind, and if no accident forces us into new emulations, we grow old, and die in admiration of ourselves.

Vanity, thus confirmed in her dominion, readily listens to the voice of idleness, and soothes the slumber of life with continual dreams of excellence and greatness. A man elated by confidence in his natural vigour of fancy and sagacity of conjecture, soon concludes that he already possesses whatever toil and inquiry can confer. He then listens with eagerness to the wild objections which folly has raised against the common means of improvement; talks of the dark chaos of indigested knowledge; describes the mischievous effects of heterogeneous sciences fermenting in the mind; relates the blunders of lettered ignorance; expatiates on the heroic merit of those who deviate from prescription, or shake off authority; and gives vent to the inflations of his heart, by declaring that he owes nothing to pedants and universities.

All these pretensions, however confident, are very often vain. The laurels which superficial acuteness gains in triumphs over ignorance unsupported by vivacity, are observed by Locke to be lost, whenever real learning and rational diligence appear against her; the sallies of gaiety are soon repressed by calm confidence; and the artifices of

subtilty are readily detected by those who, having carefully studied the question, are not easily confounded or surprised.

But though the contemner of books had neither been deceived by others nor himself, and was really born with a genius surpassing the ordinary abilities of mankind; yet surely such gifts of providence may be more properly urged as incitements to labour, than encouragements to negligence. He that neglects the culture of ground naturally fertile, is more shamefelly culpable than he whose field would scarcely recompense his husbandry.

Cicero remarks, that not to know what has been transacted in former times, is to continue always a child. If no use is made of the labours of past ages, the world must remain always in the infancy of knowledge. The discoveries of every man must terminate in his own advantage, and the studies of every age be employed on questions which the past generation had discussed and determined. We may with as little reproach borrow science as manufactures from our ancestors; and it is as rational to live in caves till our own hands have erected a palace, as to reject all knowledge of architecture, which our understandings will not supply.

To the strongest and quickest mind it is far easier to learn than to invent. The principles of arithmetick and geometry may be comprehended by a close attention in a few days; yet who can flatter himself that the study of a long life would have enabled him to discover them, when he sees them yet unknown to so many nations, whom he cannot suppose less liberally endowed with natural reason, than the *Grecians* or *Egyptians*?

Every science was thus far advanced towards perfection, by the emulous diligence of contemporary students, and the gradual discoveries of one age improving on another. Sometimes unexpected flashes of instruction were struck out by the fortuitous collision of happy incidents, or an involuntary concurrence of ideas, in which the philosopher to whom they happened, had no other merit than that of knowing their value, and transmitting, unclouded, to posterity that light which had been kindled by causes out of his power. The happiness of these casual illuminations no man can promise to himself, because no endeavours can procure them; and therefore whatever be our abilities or application, we must submit to learn from others what perhaps would have lain hid for ever from human penetration, had not some remote inquiry brought it to view; as treasures are thrown up by the ploughman and the digger in the rude exercise of their common occupations.

The man whose genius qualifies him for great undertakings, must at least be content to learn from books the present state of human knowledge; that he may not ascribe to himself the invention of arts generally known; weary his attention with experiments of which the event has been long registered; and waste, in attempts which have already succeeded or miscarried, that time which might have been spent with usefulness and honour upon new undertakings.—But though the study of books is necessary, it is not sufficient to constitute literary eminence. He that wishes to be counted among the benefacters of posterity, must add by his own toil to the acquisitions of his ancestors,

and secure his memory from neglect by some valuable improvement. This can only be effected by looking out upon the wastes of the intellectual world, and extending the power of learning over regions yet undisciplined and barbarous; or by surveying more exactly her ancient dominions, and driving ignorance from the fortresses and retreats where she skulks undetected and undisturbed. Every science has its difficulties which yet call for solution before we attempt new systems of knowledge; as every country has its forests and marshes which it would be wise to cultivate and drain, before distant colonies are projected as a necessary discharge of the exuberance of inhabitants.

No man ever yet became great by imitation. Whatever hopes for the veneration of mankind must have invention in the design or the execution; either the effect must itself be new, or the means by which it is produced. Either truths hitherto unknown must be discovered, or those which are already known enforced by stronger evidence, facilitated by clearer method, or elucidated by brighter illustrations.

Fame cannot spread wide or endure long that is not rooted in nature, and manured by art. That which hopes to resist the blast of malignity, and stand firm against the attacks of time, must contain in itself some original principle of growth. The reputation which arises from the detail or transposition of borrowed sentiments, may spread for a while, like ivy, on the rind of antiquity, but will be torn away by accident or contempt, and suffered to rot unheeded on the ground.

N°155. TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1751.

——*Steriles transmissimus annos,*
Hæc ævi mihi prima dies, hæc limina vitæ.
STAT.

——Our barren years are past;
Be this of life the first, of sloth the last.
ELPHINSTON.

No weakness of the human mind has more frequently incurred animadversion, than the negligence with which men overlook their own faults, however flagrant, and the easiness with which they pardon them, however frequently repeated.

It seems generally believed, that as the eye cannot see itself, the mind has no faculties by which it can contemplate its own state, and that therefore we have not means of becoming acquainted with our real characters; an opinion which, like innumerable other postulates, an inquirer finds himself inclined toadmit upon very little evidence, because it affords a ready solution of many difficulties. It will explain why the greatest abilities frequently fail to promote the happiness of those who possess them; why those who can distinguish with the utmost niccty the boundaries of vice and virtue, suffer them to be confounded in their own conduct; why the active and vigilant resign their affairs implicitly to the management of others; and why the cautious and fearful make hourly approaches

towards ruin, without one sigh of solicitude or struggle for escape.

When a position teems thus with commodious consequences, who can without regret confess it to be false. Yet it is certain that declaimers have indulged a disposition to describe the dominion of the passions, as extended beyond the limits that nature assigned. Self-love is often rather arrogant than blind; it does not hide our faults from ourselves, but persuades us that they escape the notice of others, and disposes us to resent censures lest we should confess them to be just. We are secretly conscious of defects and vices which we hope to conceal from the publick eye, and please ourselves with innumerable impostures, by which, in reality, no body is deceived.

In proof of the dimness of our internal sight, or the general inability of man to determine rightly concerning his own character, it is common to urge the success of the most absurd and incredible flattery, and the resentment always raised by advice, however soft, benevolent, and reasonable. But flattery, if its operation be nearly examined, will be found to owe its acceptance, not to our ignorance but knowledge of our failures, and to delight us rather as it consoles our wants than displays our possessions. He that shall solicit the favour of his patron by praising him for qualities which he can find in himself, will be defeated by the more daring panegyrist who enriches him with adscititious excellence. Just praise is only a debt, but flattery is a present. The acknowledgment of those virtues on which conscience congratulates us, is a tribute that we can at any time exact with

confidence; but the celebration of those which we only feign or desire without any vigorous endeavours to attain them, is received as a confession of sovereignty over regions never conquered, as a favourable decison of disputable claims, and is more welcome as it is more gratuitous.

Advice is offensive, not because it lays us open to unexpected regret, or convicts us of any fault which had escaped our notice, but because it shows us that we are known to others as well as to ourselves; and the officious monitor is persecuted with hatred, not because his accusation is false, but because he assumes that superiority which we are not willing to grant him, and has dared to detect what we desired to conceal.

For this reason advice is commonly ineffectual. If those who follow the call of their desires, without inquiry whither they are going, had deviated ignorantly from the paths of wisdom, and were rushing upon dangers unforeseen, they would readily listen to information that recals them from their errors, and catch the first alarm by which destruction or infamy is denounced. Few that wander in the wrong way mistake it for the right; they only find it more smooth and flowery, and indulge their own choice rather than approve it: therefore few are persuaded to quit it by admonition or reproof, since it impresses no new conviction, nor confers any powers of action or resistance. He that is gravely informed how soon profusion will annihilate his fortune, hears with little advantage what he knew before, and catches at the next occasion of expence, because advice has no force to suppress his vanity. He that is told how certainly intempe-

ance will hurry him to the grave, runs with his usual speed to a new course of luxury, because his reason is not invigorated, nor his appetite weakened.

The mischief of flattery is, not that it persuades any man that he is what he is not, but that it suppresses the influence of honest ambition, by raising an opinion that honour may be gained without the toil of merit; and the benefit of advice arises commonly, not from any new light imparted to the mind, but from the discovery which it affords of the publick suffrages. He that could withstand conscience is frighted at infamy, and shame prevails when reason was defeated.

As we all know our own faults, and know them commonly with many aggravations which human perspicacity cannot discover, there is, perhaps, no man, however hardened by impudence or dissipated by levity, sheltered by hypocrisy or blasted by disgrace, who does not intend some time to review his conduct and to regulate the remainder of his life by the laws of virtue. New temptations indeed attack him, new invitations are offered by pleasure and interest, and the hour of reformation is always delayed; every delay gives vice another opportunity of fortifying itself by habit; and the change of manners, though sincerely intended and rationally planned, is referred to the time when some craving passion shall be fully gratified, or some powerful allurement cease its importunity.

Thus procrastination is accumulated on procrastination, and one impediment succeeds another, till age shatters our resolution, or death intercepts the project of amendment. Such is often the end of salutary purposes, after they have long delighted

the imagination, and appeased that disquiet which every mind feels from known misconduct, when the attention is not diverted by business or by pleasure.

Nothing surely can be more unworthy of a reasonable nature, than to continue in a state so opposite to real happiness, as that all the peace of solitude, and felicity of meditation, must arise from resolutions of forsaking it. Yet the world will often afford examples of men, who pass months and years in a continual war with their own convictions, and are daily dragged by habit, or betrayed by passion, into practices which they closed and opened their eyes with purposes to avoid; purposes which, though settled on conviction, the first impulse of momentary desire totally overthrows.

The influence of custom is indeed such, that to conquer it will require the utmost efforts of fortitude and virtue; nor can I think any men more worthy of veneration and renown, than those who have burst the shackles of habitual vice. This victory however has different degrees of glory as of difficulty; it is more heroick as the objects of guilty gratification are more familiar, and the recurrence of solicitation more frequent. He that from experience of the folly of ambition resigns his offices, may set himself free at once from temptation to squander his life in courts, because he cannot regain his former station. He who is enslaved by an amorous passion may quit his tyrant in disgust, and absence will, without the help of reason, overcome by degrees the desire of returning. But those appetites to which every place affords their proper object, and which require *no* preparatory measures or gradual advances, are *more* tenaciously adhesive; the wish is so near the

enjoyment, that compliance often precedes consideration, and before the powers of reason can be summoned, the time for employing them is past.

Indolence is therefore one of the vices from which those whom it once infects are seldom reformed. Every other species of luxury operates upon some appetite that is quickly satiated, and requires some concurrence of art or accident which every place will not supply; but the desire of ease acts equally at all hours, and the longer it is indulged is the more increased. To do nothing is in every man's power; we can never want an opportunity of omitting duties. The lapse to indolence is soft and imperceptible, because it is only a mere cessation of activity; but the return to diligence is difficult, because it implies a change from rest to motion, from privation to reality.

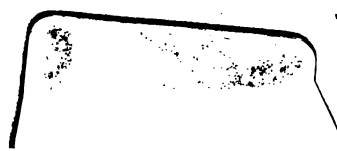
Facilis deſcenſus Averni:
Noctes atque dies patet atri janua ditis?
Sed revocare gradum, ſuperaſque evadere ad auras,
Hoc opus, hic labor eſt.

VIRG.

The gates of hell are open night and day;
Smooth the descent, and easy is the way;
But to return and view the cheerful skies,
In this the task and mighty labour lies.

DRYDEN.

Of this vice, as of all others, every man who indulgesit is conscious; we all know our own state, if we could be induced to consider it; and it might perhaps be useful to the conquest of all these ensnarers of the mind, if at certain stated dayslife was reviewed. Many things necessary are omitted because we

vainly imagine that they may be always performed; and what cannot be done without pain will for ever be delayed, if the time of doing it be left unsettled. No corruption is great but by long negligence, which can scarcely prevail in a mind regularly and frequently awakened by periodical remorse. He that thus breaks his life into parts, will find in himself a desire to distinguish every stage of his existence by some improvement, and delight himself with the approach of the day of recollection, as of the time which is to begin a new series of virtue and felicity.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.